Daily Report

Central Eurasia

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Key Results

ITAR-TASS Updates Party List Election Results

LD2212084095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0811 GMT 22 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, December 22 (Itar-Tass) — Follow updated results of State Duma elections in 195 out of 225 party list constituencies as for Friday morning.

	FRIDAY	THURSDAY
Communist party	21.99	21.99
Liberal Democratic party	11.19	11.14
Our Home is Russia	9.67	9.65
Yabloko	7.13	7.11
Women of Russia	4.59	
Working Russia	4.58	
Congress of Russian Communities	4.31	
Svyatoslav Fedorov party	4.00	
Democratic Russia's Choice	3.95	

Commission Gives Voting Totals for 192 Constituencies

LD2112222895 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1541 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Belskiy]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moscow, 21 Dec — Four electoral blocs continue to lead in the party-list elections to the Russian State Duma after the results of vote-counting in 192 of the 225 constituencies. [passage omitted]

According to the Central Electoral Commission the total number of voters in the 192 constituencies is 85,163,618. A total of 53,596,042 ballot papers were deemed valid and 1,021,828 invalid. A total of 1,523,879 people expressed their opposition to the lists of all parties and associations in the 192 constituencies. Compared with the morning's figures the Women of Russia association's result figures were a little worse. At 1000 hours [0700 GMT] 4.62 percent of the votes had been cast for the Women of Russia, but the figure at 1640 hours Moscow time was only 4.59 percent.

Updated Election Results for Party Lists

LD2112155795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1532 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, December 21 (Itar-Tass) — Follow updated results of State Duma elections in 192 out of 225 party list constituencies as for Thursday [21 December] night.

183 Districts

	night	morning
Communist party	21.99	21.50
Liberal Democratic party	11.14	11.08
Our Home is Russia	9.65	9.83
Yabloko	7.11	7.19

Other 39 parties are failing to approach the five-percent qualification barier for the State Duma.

Remaining 42 Districts Not To Change Election Outcome

LD2112132695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1307 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Natalia Panshina]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, December 21 — The counting of ballots in the remaining 42 federal districts, some eleven million ballots, will hardly result in substantive changes in the alignment of forces in the new Duma. According to the information of the Central Electoral Commission, the ballots in 183 districts out of the 225 have been counted by ten AM. Moscow time on December 21.

It is apparent that only four parties will be represented in the new compostion on the State Duma on proportional basis. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation is the undoubted winner, totalling 11,153,033 votes, or 21.50 percent of the poll. The LDPR is the runner-up with 5,748,677 votes (11.08 percent of the poll). Our Home is Russia is third with 5,098,500 votes (9.83 percent), Yabloko bloc is fourth with 3,731,646 votes (7.19 percent).

Extra percentage may be earned by the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and the Agrarians as a result of the counting of votes in the Krasnoyarsk, Krasnodar, Stavropol and Khabarovsk territories, in a number of districts in the Kemerovo, Irkustsk and

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Novosibirsk region and several districts in Black-soil zone. The counting of votes in nine more districts in the Moscow region and in a number of districts in Kalmykia, Yakutia, Tatarstan and Daghestan will hardly increase considerably the representation of Our Home is Russia bloc in the Duma. According to unofficial information, voters in the Moscow region have various preferences and this means that indexes of the leading political parties will not change substantially.

It can be said definitely that election blocs which earned over four percent on the federal lists but have not cleared the five per cent hurdle can only count on having in the Duma their representatives elected in one-seat constituences. These organisations are Women of Russia who earned 4.62 per cent, Democratic Choice of Russia — United Democrats — 4.00 per cent, the Congress of Russian Communities — 4.18 per cent, Workers' Self-Organisation Party — 4.03 per cent, Communists — USSR — 4.56 per cent and Agrarians — 3.99 per cent.

A number of small parties will still be represented in the Duma as they earned one to three seats in one-seat consituencies. They would probably have been able to have as many deputies in the lower house under the proportionate representation if there had been no five per cent barrier. Factions of large parties would have had half the number of deputies in the Duma in that case.

Leading Parties Still Do Not Have 50 Percent of Votes

LD2112172395 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1500 GMT 21 Dec 95

[Video report by Igor Vykhukholev; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Today, the Russian Central Electoral Commission completed the generalization of the voting in all 225 single-seat constituencies. [passage omitted]

[Begin reporter Vlada Vishnevskaya recording] In the single-seat constituencies the Communist Party was the front runner with 58 seats. [passage omitted]

The information coming in from the Central Electoral Commission does not change the already established picture. About 80 percent of the total number of those who voted for party lists have been processed, and the group of four leaders is still the same: the Communist Party [CPRF], the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia [LDPR], Our Home is Russia [OHIR], and Yabloko. (Video shows chart:)

CPRF	21.5 percent
LDPR	11.08
OHIR	9.83
Yabloko	7.19

State Duma Speaker Ivan Rybkin thinks that the four associations which triumphed in the elections may encounter serious problems. The point is that, if those four do not muster 50 percent of the total votes cast, i.e. exactly half of the seats in the Duma, this may provide grounds for an appeal to the Constitutional Court. So far, the four parties combined have 49.6 per cent. [end recording]

Shakhray Still Deputy Premier Despite Winning Duma Seat

LD2112174295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1357 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Dec 21 (Interfax) - Deputy Russian Prime Minister Sergey Shakhray, leader of the Party of Russian Unity and Accord, has not undertook any formal moves yet to leave the government, Shakhray's office told Interfax Thursday.

At a press conference in Rostov-on-Don Tuesday Shakhray announced his intention to resign in order to focus on the work in the parliament. Shakhray won elections to the State Duma in a single- mandate constituency in this city.

Sources in Shakhray's office pointed out that Shakhray will present a note on resignation in the time established by the law, after final official results of the elections are published.

In line with generally adopted practice, Shakhray's note on resignation should be coordinated with head of the Cabinet Viktor Chernomyrdin and confirmed by Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

LDPR Deputy Head Supports Rybkin for Duma Speaker

LD2112202695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1623 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Dec 21 (Interfax) — Ivan Rybkin could be considered for chairmanship of the sixth State Duma even though his Agrarian Party has not overcome the five percent plank, Aleksandr Vengerovskiy, deputy chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), said in his private capacity.

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Vengerovskiy said that Rybkin had done very well as speaker of the previous State Duma. Because he had won a parliamentary seat on his own in the Voronezh region, Rybkin will not be formally linked to any large political group in parliament, said Vengerovskiy, who was elected on the LDPR ticket.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the LDPR leader, also spoke in favor of a neutral State Duma chairman.

On the other hand, Gennadiy Zyuganov, Communist Party leader, said that the speaker's candidacy should result from a compromise between all the parties represented in the State Duma.

Vengerovskiy did not rule out the possibility of other independent candidates, in particular Nikolay Gonchar, currently chairman of the Budget Committee in the Federation Council, the upper house.

According to Vengerovskiy, Gonchar is an experienced manager and an authority on the budget who can get along with Moscow officials. This should help Gonchar tackle numerous issues in the operation of the State Duma.

'Common Cause' Leader To Form New Group in Duma

LD2112202495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1623 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Dec 21 (Interfax) — The leader of the Common Cause movement, Irina Khakamada, who was elected to the Duma in a single-mandate district intends to set up her own group in the new Duma. She was the only member of her movement to get a seat in parliament.

Khakamada told Interfax Thursday the group would be formed of different people, but found it premature to name any concrete persons.

She finds it absolutely reasonable to inquire to the Constitutional Court about the representativeness of the new Duma because judging by preliminary results the lower house of parliament will be formed by parties elected by less than half of the voters.

The parties clearing the 5 percent barrier have 47 percent of votes together so far.

Experts on constitutional legislation have told Interfax the election law does not specify what makes the Duma representative or non-representative. The law does not contain any figures to this end.

Therefore, experts say, it is impossible to assess the representative nature of the Duma in the absence of appropriate legislation.

'Labor of Russia' Leader Supports Alliance With Communists

LD2112200695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1641 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By Lyudmila Aleksandrova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, December 21 (Itar-Tass) — Leader of the "Labour of Russia" bloc Viktor Anpilov has suggested forming an alliance with the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) to rally forces in the forthcoming presidential elections in June. Anpilov declared that he was prepared to withdraw his candidature in the presidential race in favor of a CPRF candidates provided the CPRF complies with certain conditions.

Anpilov represents a communist coalition "Labour of Russia - for the Soviet Union" which, according to preliminary results of the elections, was 0.5 per cent short of the mandatory five per cent barrier.

Addressing a news conference today, Anpilov motivated his proposal, saying that the CPRF was the most popular party among the people. Anpilov noted that he would wait for ten days to get an answer to his proposal from CPRF leaders, and afterwards, would make similar appeals to the KRO bloc or the Agrarian Party.

Anpilov demanded that the CPRF make a public commitment to fight for the restoration of the Soviet power and the abolishment of the institute of presidency in Russia, to stop privatisation and bring to justice all those responsible for damaging the economy of the country.

In an interview with Itar-Tass Anpilov said that the coalition - Communists - Labour of Russia - for the Soviet Union, intends to submit a draft bill on the restoration of the Soviet power at the first session of the newly elected parliament.

According to preliminary results of the elections, this coalition will be represented in the State Duma by one lawmaker only.

Regional Activities

Latest Results From St. Petersburg, North Ossetia

LD2112170795 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1101 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moscow, 21 Dec, ITAR-TASS — The results of the State Duma elections held on 17 December are being finalized in the Russian regions, ITAR-TASS correspondents report.

The results of voting in St Petersburg were officially announced today. Yabloko took five of the eight single-mandate constituencies and topped the federal party

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list vote with 16.1 percent. Next was the Communist Party of the Russian Federation with 13.3 percent and then Russia is Our Home with 12.8 percent. [passage omitted]

The Russian Federation Communist Party took 51.7 percent of the vote in North Ossetia, beating the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia [LDPR] (10.2 percent) and Russia is Our Home (6 percent). [passage omitted]

In Mari El the LDPR came out on top with 20.7 percent, ahead of the Communists (18.5 percent) and the Agrarian Party (9.4 percent).

In Astrakhan Region the Communists took 24.1 percent, the LDPR 16.4 percent and Russia is Our Home 12.5 percent.

In Saratov Region the Communists won with 25.9 percent of the vote, followed by the LDPR with 10.5 percent and My Fatherland with 7.9 percent.

Results continue to come in.

Communists Lead in Yakutiya With 17.6 Percent

LD2212114995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1105 GMT 22 Dec 95

[By Itar-Tass correspondent Oksana Zapolskaya]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yakutsk, 22 Dec — Results of the elections to the State Duma have been finalized in Yakutiya, where, because this is such a vast area, the vote count has taken a long time.

In a single-mandate constituency no 20, one tenth of a percentage of votes tipped the balance in favor of Zoya Kornilova, of the "Power to the People" bloc (led by the former Prime Minister Nikolay Ryzhkov), the Central Electoral Committee of the republic of Sakha (Yakutiya) told Itar-Tass.

In the voting on party lists, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation has taken the lead with 17.6 percent; followed by "Russia is Our Home" with 13.7 percent, and the "Power to the People" association with 7.5 percent.

Presidential Representative on Volgograd Election Returns

MK2212055595 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Dec 95 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Russia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yevgeniy Kuznetsov, presidential representative in Volgograd Oblast, stated, in assessing the preliminary results of the elections for the Russian Federation State Duma, that they were generally the same as forecast. One exception were the points scored by the LDPR, which was supported by voters of the so-called "categorical persuasion." The Communists have gained a firm foothold in Volgograd. However, in Kuznetsov's words, "if they try to effect any turn in the country's economy at all, this could entail the already well-known consequences. [no end quotation as published] In this connection, the Russian Federation president's representative stated, "Boris Yeltsin does not intend to permit any radical change in the state in the near future."

Moscow Region Governor Runoff Set for 29-30 Dec

LD2212115795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1122 GMT 22 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, December 22 (Itar-Tass) — A Moscow Region governor election run-off, to involve Anatoliy Tyazhlov and Valeriy Galchenko, is to be held on December 29 and 30, the Electoral Commission of Moscow Region announced in a report made available to Itar-Tass on Friday.

The Commission points out that incumbent governor Anatoliy Tyazhlov polled more than 43 per cent of the vote during the December 17 elections while his rivals Valery Galchenko and Oleg Antonov gained 14.58 and 13.98 per cent of the vote respectively.

Election Guidelines

CEC Hails Speed of Local Commissions in Submitting Results

LD2112183795 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1623 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Dec 21 (Interfax) — District electoral commissions committed a feat in submitting preliminary election results by Tuesday, while the law grants them a week to sum them up, Central Electoral Commission (CEC) Chairman Nikolay Ryabov told Interfax Thursday.

The same law grants the CEC three weeks to draw the final voting results, Ryabov said. At the same time, he promised his commission will do its best to do it as soon as possible. The CEC had to return the preliminary results to some district commissions for their incompatibility with "the very strict requirements," he added.

Ryabov admitted his initial prediction about seven to eight parties getting into the State Duma proved wrong. "We already have the bulk of information, this is why new figures coming from district electoral commissions and input for computer processing provide

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only insignificant fluctuations of results by individual election associations," he said. Ryabov explained the slight decrease in the voting results of the four leading associations by a "growth in the general volume of data" coming from district electoral commissions starting on Tuesday.

According to Ryabov, the voting results differ significantly in all regions of Russia. He referred to two neighboring internal republics, Bashkortostan and Tatarstan. If 26 percent of the Bashkir voted for the communists, then in Tatarstan they gained only 15 percent of votes. At the same time, 28.6 percent of electors in Tatarstan voted for Our Home Is Russia (NDR) and 2.1 percent for the Agrarian Party of Russia (APR), while in Bashkortostan the two associations won about 16 percent of votes each.

Discrepancies Alleged in Military's Duma Ballots

MK2212105795 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 22 Dec 95 p 2

[Report by Oleg Blotskiy: "Official and Real Results. They Hardly Match in the Case of the Russian Army"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is impossible to say with any accuracy whom the Russian Army preferred in the parliamentary voting. A vast majority of military people cast their ballots in open polling stations, and only 2 percent did it in closed ones. We will never learn the results. At least, the military is not going to let us see the signature sheets and reports. This became clear on the night of 17-18 December, when a victory report born in the depths of the Defense Ministry swept Russia's mass media — more than 60 percent of the military had voted for the NDR [Russia Is Our Home].

The election results your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent received from the 201st Russian Motorized Division deployed in Tajikistan are different. Of the 8,000 conscripts, warrant officers, and officers there, 22.8 percent voted for the LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia]; 21.1 percent for the CPRF [Communist Party of Russia]; and 9.7 percent each for the NDR and the Anpilov-Tyulkin bloc.

These are rather unexpected results considering that this is a fighting division, and many of its officers and conscripts have already experienced the meaning of war. One would think that none of them would want to get their boots wet in the waters of the nearest ocean. Still they go and vote for Zhirinovskiy. Furthermore, there is a picture of Vladimir Volfovich [Zhirinovskiy] displayed prominently in an officers' club of the 201st Division.

One of the staff officers of the division commented thus on the situation: "We are in a total information blackout: There are no papers, magazines, television, or radio. We receive all information in snatches and, naturally, the men have no idea who stands for what. Nor did we see politicians around here. Only two delegations came here this year. One was led by Zhirinovskiy, the other by Zyuganov."

All signs are that the money the president and the prime minister "dished out" to the army for voting failed to pep up the military men much.

The same picture (with regard to the NDR) was also in evidence in another region of the ex-USSR where the biggest Russian army group is now deployed. According to the Russian Embassy in Chisinau, 14,534 people cast ballots in the polling station in Tiraspol. This number consists of Russian Army military and auxiliary personnel and citizens of Russia who now live in the capital of the unrecognized Dniester Region.

Many people, however, know that the number of Russian military men [there] is between 8,000 and 9,000. The turnout was as high in Dushanbe: More than 90 percent of the conscripts, warrant officers, and officers came to the polling station in the garrison's Officers' House; hence, the number of voters was slightly above 7,200.

Now for the overall number of votes: 6,331 for the KRO; 2,599 for the CPRF; 1,842 for the LDPR; 421 for the NDR; 227 for "Yabloko."

With regard to affection for the NDR in the former 14th Army, the Defense Ministry Main Indoctrination Directorate sneaked in the following information: 43 percent of its servicemen voted for the prime minister's bloc. A simple calculation shows that this is 3,036 men. Supposing 421 ballots were cast for the NDR exclusively by military men, the actual figure is less than the official one by a factor of 7.35.

To be fair, it should be noted that soldiers in Chechnya voted solidly for the NDR. Indoctrination officers, who received strict instructions from Moscow, offered the following "weighty" argument in working with their subordinates: "Guys, everybody else will serve two years, you will serve only a year and a half." The indoctrinators absolutely "lost sight" of the fact that it is Viktor Chernomyrdin who personally sent to the Duma a draft law on the longer term of service.

As for officers in Chechnya, they did not vote for the NDR at all. To the question, "For whom then?," one officer said: "Look at the overall results. The people and the army are one."

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My own poll among the Russian General Staff officers I know, ranging from major to colonel, yielded the following results: 4 voted for the CPRF; 2 for the KRO; and 1 each for "My Fatherland" (Gromov), the LDPR, "Yabloko," and "Russia's Democratic Choice."

Commentary

Premier Notes Need To Draw Conclusions From Election

MM2212124895 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 22 Dec 95 p 1

[Report by Valeriy Vedernikov: "Governor Yelagin Receives Premier on His Home Territory"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Orenburg — During Viktor Chernomyrdin's visit to Orenburg Oblast the premier gave high marks to the activity of Vladimir Yelagin, head of the oblast administration, who deservedly retained his post in the latest elections, garnering 60 percent of the vote. But he did observe that the election results must be analyzed and conclusions drawn from them. Despite the fact that Russia Is Our Home came in second in the oblast, Chernomyrdin is making no secret of the fact that he was counting on more substantial support for his movement.

Chernomyrdin visited his own little home territory — the village of Chernyy Otrog. The premier plans to spend four days in Orenburg Oblast.

Zhirinovskiy Says Communists Singing 'Swan Song'

MK2212121395 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 22 Dec 95 p 2

[Interview with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, by Natalya Konstantinova: "LDPR Had No Doubts About Its Success, But Expected More. Zhirinovskiy Thinks the Communists Are Singing Their 'Swan Song'" — place and date not given; first paragraph is introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Vladimir Volfovich Zhirinovskiy, leader of the LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia] faction, answered questions asked by your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent.

[Konstantinova] Vladimir Volfovich, how do you assess the outcome of the elections in general? What results did you expect the LDPR to achieve?

[Zhirinovskiy] The elections results did not come as a surprise to us. I think the final tally will be announced by the weekend, but only four factions will keep their seats in the Duma. As for the LDPR, its results could have been better, but you should bear in mind that our party has been harassed for two years, and its representatives have been kept away from executive structures. For this reason, it was difficult for people to determine whether the party they had voted for was doing something good. The fact that the Communists have overtaken us is not a success; it is their swan song. A major part of the older generation is recalling the quiet life they used to lead.

[Konstantinova] Is the LDPR planning to form an alliance with any other party?

[Zhirinovskiy] We are not entering into any alliances. If the Communists propose solutions that will contribute to totalitarianism, we will be unable to back them. We do not want to slide back into the past, but neither do we want things to go on as they do now. We want to make an adjustment to the policy of privatization and that of propaganda and culture.

[Konstantinova] What priorities has the LDPR defined for itself in the new parliament?

[Zhirinovskiy] We are opposed to yet more intervention in Chechnya's affairs under the scenario Yavlinskiy has referred to. The people are tired of all sorts of commissions. In addition, we are not entitled to interfere with the functions of the executive authority. It is the Internal Affairs Ministry that is operating there. For this reason, we should pass laws as soon as possible that will improve the economic situation in the country. We should give both the public and the private sectors the opportunity to grow, change the fiscal system, establish control over commercial banks. We will again insist on Kozyrev's dismissal, but not in order to drastically change the current foreign policy line. The debacles in the Balkans and the CIS are clearly Kozyrev's blunders.

Gaydar Comments on Bloc's Plans for Presidential Election

LD2112180895

[FBIS Editorial Report] Moscow NTV in Russian at 2120 GMT on 20 December carries during the "Versions" program a 15-minute interview with Yegor Gaydar, leader of the Democratic Choice of Russia — United Democrats, by correspondent Dorenko.

Dorenko asks Gaydar if his party will break the 5 percent barrier. Gaydar replies, "Evidently, we will not get through the 5 percent barrier." Asked where his party went wrong, Gaydar replies, "Over the past two years, the democratic powers have unfortunately made a lot of mistakes. We fought against these mistakes, including against the Chechen war, perhaps more fiercely than anyone else. Nevertheless, the logic of political life is such that we have to pay for them."

Gaydar says he is very grateful to the 2.5 million voters who cast their ballot for his party. He continues, "I regret

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that some of those who could support us gave in to panic at the last moment and ran to other blocs."

Asked what the fate of his party is now, Gaydar replies, "Our party will be a party that is consistently liberal, a party that consistently opposes the fascist and communist threat. Russia needs such a party. It will live. It will exist. The future lies with us, nevertheless."

Gaydar says he does not consider it "worthy" to try and win a parliamentary seat for himself by standing in a simple-majority constituency.

Asked how his party will be involved in the presidential elections in 1996, Gaydar replies, "It is clear today that if the democrats are as divided as they were in the parliamentary elections, Messrs [Gennadiy] Zyuganov and [Vladimir] Zhirinovskiy will get through to the second round. We will try to make a wise choice between Zyuganov and Zhirinovskiy, but I categorically refuse to do this. I do not know if there is a wise choice in this situation." He continues, "I think we have to do everything to prevent this from happening. Therefore, and I stress that this is my personal opinion, I do not think our party will put forward a presidential candidate. We will try to do everything possible to ensure that a single candidate is put forward from moderate democratic forces in the presidential elections."

Gaydar says, "I would strongly advise those from Russia is Our Home and Yabloko to hold constructive dialogues, constructive talks, and to try to reach agreement on who they will put forward in the presidential elections." He continues, "I can guarantee that we will try to use all the influence we have, to use the trust of the 2.5 million voters who cast their ballot for us...so that the second round of the presidential elections is not between Zyuganov and Zhirinovskiy."

Daily Says 5-Percent Bar Skews Duma Representation

MM2212123395 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 22 Dec 95 p 1

[Report by Dmitriy Orlov: "Representation of the People Sacrificed to Party Development. As ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI Suggested, Elections Graphically Confirmed Election Law's Imperfection"]

[FBIS Translated Text] We have all been avidly following the figures emanating from the Central Electoral Commission which reflect the results of the parliamentary elections which have taken place in the country. Everybody without exception is interested in the slightest swings in the proportion of votes obtained by each electoral association. But few people have paid attention to another figure: 49.32 percent — according to data as of 20 December this is the proportion of the votes of the Russians who went to the polls that was obtained by the four blocs which cleared the 5-percent barrier.

In reality this means that the votes of only one-half of voters will be taken into account when seats in the proportional section of the Duma are distributed. The actual figure could still change slightly, but the essence is the same: The representativeness of the 1995 Duma is, to put it mildly, far from ideal.

Electoral associations which are fairly well known and which have a solid electoral base have failed to get into the lower chamber of parliament. The issue here is not at all that "Democratic Choice" did not get in — at the end of the day some people prefer Gaydar and some prefer Anpilov. The problem lies elsewhere. Under the existing electoral system the will of a colossal number of voters is being ignored.

In the 1993 elections the situation was different — the electoral associations which passed the 5-percent barrier enjoyed the support of 87 percent of Russians. The voters' will was reflected fairly adequately. Now the Communist Party [of the Russian Federation — CPRF], NDR [Russia Is Our Home], LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia], and "Yabloko," which have cleared the barrier, are practically doubling (compared with the voters' will) their number of seats in the section of the Duma which is elected from party lists: The CPRF, which garnered 21.03 percent, should get 96 of the 225 seats (42.64 percent); the LDPR, which obtained 11.02 percent, should get 50 seats (22.34 percent); with 10.07 percent NDR should get 46 seats (20.41 percent); and with 7.2 percent "Yabloko" should get 33 seats (14.6 percent) (figures as of 20 December). Taking into account single-seat districts the situation changes (the CPRF gets 153 seats, NDR gets 56, the LDPR gets 50, "Yabloko" gets 47, the Agrarian Party of Russia gets 20, Russia's Democratic Choice gets nine, and so on down the line), but the Duma's representativeness is not enhanced by this.

It is high time to recall how the election law was passed. Could a result like the current one have been foreseen? Of course it could. But Deputy Viktor Sheynis (of the "Yabloko" faction), the main architect of the 5-percent barrier, insisted with exemplary inflexibility on its introduction both in 1993, when the elections were held in accordance with the president's edict, and in 1995. To be fair it should be noted that he was far from alone in this desire: Everybody who hoped to clear the barrier easily, insisted that it be kept. But a question from 102 State Duma deputies to the Constitutional Court (belated, you will agree) regarding the "barrier"

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Article 62 of the already passed law on elections was simply not considered.

Leonid Kirichenko, a well-known expert on electoral legislation, told ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI's correspondent that the country's existing electoral system is far from a proportional system, where the principle is "everybody gets his share" rather than "everything to the winner."

The election law's elaborators borrowed a considerable number of norms from the German law and are still citing foreign experience. Yet in Germany itself the 5-percent barrier operates far from always: If at least three candidates from a particular party win in single-seat districts, its party list of candidates participates in the distribution of seats, that is to say the barrier in front of it is completely removed.

"In our law the size of the barrier depends neither on the results of elections in single-seat districts nor on how many parties participate in the elections — two, 42, or all 273 registered by the Justice Ministry," Kirichenko said. It is hard not to agree with him. The "legal" opportunity to appropriate other people's votes united a whole number of associations on the eve of the elections. This "greed" backfired on "Russia's Democratic Choice" and the "Women of Russia."

A "floating" barrier, which Aleksandr Shokhin, an NDR leader, proposed be introduced in November-December, could have rectified the situation. At any rate, the will of such a number of voters would not have been ignored. But nothing came of it.

Can anything really be changed now? Alas, most likely not. The Constitutional Court has stated its position fairly clearly and by all accounts it will not be possible to declare the election results invalid. While the chances of such an outcome in local courts are absolutely negligible. Not to mention that the problem of the Duma's representativeness will recede into the background when deputies' seats and posts in the lower chamber of parliament are being shared out.

Maybe "screening out the small fry" will bring some benefit to the party political system. But for the time being the results of the 1995 elections provide incontrovertible evidence that representation of the people has been sacrificed to party development.

Duma Consultant, Academician View Election Results

LD2112173595

[FBIS Editorial Report] Moscow NTV in Russian at 2100 GMT on 20 December carries during the "Segodnya" newscast a 10-minute recorded interview with Oleg Rumyantsev, State Duma consultant, and Dmitriy Oreshkin, expert of the Geographical Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, on the preliminary results of the 17 December elections to the State Duma.

Rumyantsev says, "It is most likely that the State Duma will use its powers under Article 103 to express no-confidence in the present government and it will have every grounds for doing so, since President Yeltsin cannot dissolve the State Duma over the next year. A simple majority is required for such a decision to be made. There may be a simple majority if the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, Yabloko, and a considerable part of first-past-the-post constituency candidates unite. Paradoxically, the fate of the government, the fate of the no-confidence issue will depend on how the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) votes and it seems to me that the LDPR, in the best traditions of the past two years, will begin to bargain and there will be a continuation of that quite interesting situation in which the LDPR, bargaining with the government, fills the till of its future presidential elections. Thus, the government will evidently fill Zhirinovskiy's till to ensure his success in the 1996 June elections."

Dmitriy Oreshkin, says, "On the whole, the picture is this so far: Overall 81 seats have gone to the Agrarians, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, to Ryzhkov's bloc, that is, to the Communist opposition, let's put it like that. Roughly 20-22 percent belongs to centrist and right-wing parties. The independents have got the remaining percentage. They on the whole are divided between these two poles, between the communists and let's say centrist blocs in the Duma."

An unidentified correspondent says, "On Wednesday, Viktor Borisyuk, a staff member of the Presidential Analytical Directorate, stated that Boris Yeltsin had already decided to run for a second term; although, he has not announced it. At the same time, Borisyuk does not rule out that when the president announces his decision officially, Yeltsin may change his mind and announce his successor's name. However, research of the geographical division of political passions shows that the results of the future presidential elections may differ sharply from the results of voting in 1991."

Dmitriy Oreshkin continues, "The whole north and east of the country, that is territories which export resources, extract resources, supported either independent candidates or centrist- orientated blocs. Densely-populated territories of southern Siberia, the Far East, and especially the European part gave their sympathies to communist-orientated deputies. What is interesting is that it is quite obvious that in the center of the map, in the area of the Kuzbass, a hard red spot of unequivocal communist orientation is being formed — that is

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Kemerovo region and its adjacent regions. A very stable zone of communist orientation of the population also has been formed to the south of Moscow, on the territory of the so-called red belt, which conforms to the black soil zone of Russia. What is new for election geography specialists is the formation of a similar opposition belt to the north of Moscow that did not exist in the last elections. To sum up, it should be said that on the whole, communist opposition parties were successful, although not as successful as specialists predicted before the elections. Centrist parties performed rather poorly. Democrats did a bit better than they predicted. Both Gaydar's and Yavlinskiy's bloc took three or four seats more than experts promised them. On the whole, that does not even out the situation. The main results will be clear once the independents have declared which faction they belong to. That will be the subject of the main battles in the Duma when it begins to function."

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ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 22 Dec

LD2212061595 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0604 GMT 22 Dec 95

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW December 22 (Itar-Tass) — Today's Moscow-based newspapers continue to comment on the State Duma election data that come in from the Central Electoral Commission, and report the situation around the Chechen town of Gudermes.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on the imperfection of electoral law.

The newspaper believes that the recent elections to the Lower House of the Russian parliament have "patently confirmed the imperfection of the electoral law".

The votes of only a half of the electorate will be taken into account during the distribution of Duma seats won under the proportional representation scheme, the newspaper notes.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA on the Duma's becoming "redder".

Political scientist Aleksey Kiva writes in the newspaper that "at all events, the Duma has become 'redder'. Both the President and the Government will have to reckon with that. For this signifies the need to reckon with the sentiments of a rather large proportion of the population. Concessions are inevitable. Unyieldingness is sometimes worse than concessions that do not affect the main strategic line of reform".

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA on speculations as to who will be a new Speaker.

The newspaper is of the opinion that "it will be more difficult to cope with the newly-elected Duma than with the old Supreme Soviet. Everything will depend on who will be a new Speaker of the State Duma. The Russian political system will not endure another Khasbulatov. The people, apparently, do not want a new Rybkin either."

IZVESTIYA on 1996 Presidential elections.

Under the headline "What will Russia choose in the summer of 1996: a policy or a political system?", the newspaper runs articles about the forthcoming Presidential elections.

In the opinion of Lilya Shevtsova, a political scientist, time not only works against Yeltsin but is in some respect on his side as well.

"At any rate, it is precisely on him that the main scenario of the very struggle for the Presidency depends," Shevtsova pointed out. The political scientist is convinced that none of current presidential contenders stands "preferable chances" to take the place of Yeltsin.

IZVESTIYA on the kind of politicians that may run for Russia's Presidency.

The newspaper carries an article by Lev Timofeyev, a publicist, who believes that "only a politician who would stand above parties may be a Russian President." Timofeyev's opinion is that there are only two such politicians in Russia: Boris Yeltsin and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.

IZVESTIYA on the situation around Gudermes, Chechnya.

The newspaper reports that more that 100 townspeople have been killed over the period of fighting for the town.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA on Dudayev forces' plan for the seizure of Gudermes.

The newspaper's correspondent, referring to Vladimir Zorin, Deputy Head of the Territorial Board of Federal Power Bodies in Chechnya, writes that Aslan Maskhadov, Chief of Staff of Dudayev forces, took part in the elaboration of a plan for the seizure of Gudermes.

IZVESTIYA on opinions about the causes of the crash of Russian jets in Vietnam.

The newspaper carries a dispatch by its correspondent from Kubinka, Moscow Region, conveying the opinions of the colleagues of the air pilots from the "Russian Knights" air squadron, who crashed in Vietnam on December 12, about the causes of the crash.

Accord Reached With G-7 To Permanently Close Chernobyl

AU2012180795 Paris AFP in English 1740 GMT 20 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ottawa, Dec 20 (AFP) — The seven leading industrialized nations and Ukraine signed Wednesday an agreement to shut down permanently the civilian nuclear reactor at Chernobyl.

The memorandum of understanding, signed here by a Canadian official representing the Group of Seven and Ukraine Environment Minister Yuriy Kostenko, does not set a date for closure of the troubled nuclear complex.

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Border Guard Commanders Hold Meeting in Dushanbe

LD2212095195 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0943 GMT 22 Dec 95

[By Galina Gridneva]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DUSHANBE, December 22 (Itar-Tass) — The Frontier Guard Commanders Council of the CIS member states — signatories to the Collective Security Treaty discussed here today problems connected with the improvement and coordination of the functioning of those services. The meeting was chaired by Director of the Federal Frontier Guard Service of the Russian Federation General Andrey Nikolayev. He came here the day before. The meeting was attended by heads of the frontier guard services of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Tajikistan, as well as representatives of the CIS Executive Secretariat, the Coordinating Service of the Council and the Union of Veteran Organizations of Frontier Guard Troops.

The agenda of the meeting included draft plans for the creation of fundamentals of common information space of the frontier guard troops of the CIS member states, agreements on the procedure for the exchange of information dealing with the protection of outer borders and on the conceptual framework of the interstate subsystem of information supply for frontier guard troops, as well as the status of regional allied commands of frontier guard troops, intended for the joint protection of outer borders of the CIS states. The frontier guard commanders discussed as well joint concerted actions of the CIS frontier guard troops and their cooperation in search and investigation operations.

Members of the Council were greeted by Tajik President Emomali Rakhmanov. He said that the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border continued to be complicated because of incessant attempts of armed provocations and the shelling of the territory of the republic from the adjacent area. The main tasks facing frontier guards is to liquidate hotbeds of instability in the region and to block the channels of the smuggling of arms and narcotics to the republic. This can be achieved with the help of concerted actions of countries — signatories to the Collective Security Treaty.

The meeting was continued behind closed doors. A press conference is planned to be held on the results of the meeting.

During his stay in Tajikistan Director of the Russian Federal Frontier Guard Service Andrey Nikolayev had a meeting with Emomali Rakhmanov. They discussed problems connected with the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border and progress achieved at the negotiations on a peaceful settlement of the domestic crisis in Tajikistan.

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Kozyrev: Moscow To Continue Supporting United Nations

LD2112195295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1810 GMT 21 Dec 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Dec 21 (Interfax) — Russia views the United Nations as a big, important and promising international organization and will continue supporting it.

"For Russians today the U.N. is no longer an abstract symbol but a concrete part of world politics," Kozyrev said at a Thursday [21 December] meeting with the new U.N. coordinator in Russia, a representative of the High Commissioner for Refugees Christopher Carpenter.

The minister said the United Nations does not succeed in everything but still is an invaluable instrument. "An organization can be only as good as its members are," he said.

He was satisfied that the United Nations did not resign from efforts to restore peace in Bosnia, especially as far as the civilian operation is concerned.

Kozyrev also spoke for conducting the peacemaking operation in Eastern Slavonia under U.N. auspices. "I think Russia will also be ready to play a prominent role in Slavonia," he said.

He pointed out to the invaluable role of the U.N. in settling several conflicts in the CIS.

According to the minister, in Russia the U.N. and its specialized agencies contribute heavily to science, culture, humanitarian matters, the problems of displaced persons and refugees, the protection of human rights and development of democracy.

"We count on the U.N. continuing to contribute to the solution of such problems as the protection of the rights of ethnic minorities," Kozyrev stressed. He said after the collapse of the USSR over 25 million ethnic Russians remain outside Russia.

Spychief Says NATO's Eastward Expansion Threatens Russia

LD2112173295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1726 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By Olga Semyonova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, December 21 (Itar-Tass) — Foreign intelligence should be focusing on NATO's eastward expansion, which could threaten Russia, Yevgeniy Primakov, head of the Foreign Intelligence Service, said on Thursday.

Addressing a meeting devoted to the 75th anniversary of the Foreign Intelligence Service, Primakov said that the threat could arise "from the policy of NATO's expansion which brings closer to our borders the infrastructure of this currently most powerful military organisation in the world."

At the same time, the task to establish normal relationship with former cold war enemies remains, Primakov stressed.

Speaking on possible common grounds for such links between Russia's intelligence service and secret services of other countries, the spy master named the fight against nuclear proliferation, drugs, organised crime, and illegal trafficking of weapons and nuclear materials.

Primakov on Territorial Integrity, CIS Integration

LD2112202795 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1450 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Olga Semenova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 21 Dec — The Foreign Intelligence Service's aim of preventing Russia's territorial disintegration has acquired a new importance and topicality, Service Director Yevgeniy Primakov today told a gathering to mark the 75th anniversary of Russian foreign intelligence.

Foreign intelligence has done much to strengthen Russia's peacemaking role "in the southern crisis and in the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Georgia-Abkhazia, Tajik-Tajik, and other conflicts," he said. However, as the Foreign Intelligence Service steps up its work in these areas it should not forget that the greatest danger facing the country derives from ethnic and nationality conflicts emerging and developing within Russia itself, Academician Yevgeniy Primakov noted.

At the same time, he said, the service supports the recent emergence within the former USSR of centripetal trends and processes. "The future of the CIS lies in such processes," the Foreign Intelligence Service director stressed, "as long as there is a sensible approach to reality and an understanding of the need to inject several radically new elements into the policy of economic, scientific, cultural, information, and military-political integration."

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KGB Archive Contains No Requested Kennedy Documents

MK2112121595 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Dec 95 p 9

[Report by Maksim Isayev under the "Oh the times!" rubric: "American-Russian Intrigues"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 3 August 1995, the U.S. Embassy in Moscow requested the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry that all archive materials relative to the assassination of President John Kennedy of the United States that exist in the former USSR be turned over to it. The request contained a list (!) of archive materials holding interest for the Americans and expressed the readiness on behalf of the Council for Studying Archive Documents on the Assassination of President Kennedy to send its representatives to Russia in order to discuss this matter. The Foreign Ministry roused itself to action and sent its requests to the "adequate agencies," the Federal Security Service, the Foreign Intelligence Service, and the Main Intelligence Directorate [GRU]. Yet, for starters, it should have inquired why the Americans are displaying an interest in our archives relating to the Kennedy case precisely in 1995. The answer would have been embarrassing for our overseas partners. The reason is that back in 1992 the U.S. Congress passed a special law, John Kennedy Assassination Documents Act, which, among other things, assigned the task to the U.S. secretary of state to request that the KGB and the GRU release as soon as possible all documents that have a bearing on the case. Therefore, U.S. officials have disappointingly dragged their feet in accomplishing the mission assigned to them by their lawmakers. On the other hand, it is strange that the Russian Foreign Ministry has so long been unaware of the existence of the above law. Or have they just affected ignorance? Anyway, what did the Russian special services say in response, you may ask? According to them, all archive materials on the Kennedy assassination were handed over to the United States back in 1963-1964. Ironically, on issuing this response to the Foreign Ministry the "competent agencies" asked their colleagues on Smolenskaya Square to find out diplomatically why the Americans are taking an interest in our archives once again. At the same time, the original text of the Kennedy Documents Act has long and carefully been studied by the same "agencies." (By the way, it is unclear why this information did not reach the Foreign Ministry three years ago.) Maybe, the "agencies" suspect that the Americans know something? Or that they think they know....

Paratroopers Ready To Be Sent to Bosnia

LD2112151795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1509 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By Vyacheslav Guskov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KOSTROMA, December 21 (Itar-Tass) — A 1,500-strong Russian peacekeeping paratrooper brigade is ready to be sent to Bosnia and Herzegovina to ensure the implementation of ceasefire zones and disengagement agreements on in Brcko, Zvornik and Tuzla in the north of tthe republic together with the U.S. First Armour Division, commander of Russia's 98th paratrooper division Aleksandr Bespalov told reporters.

Exercises were conducted at the division's shooting ground on the frontier between the Kostroma and Yaroslavl regions on Thursday to testify that the Russian paratroopers were ready to start implementing a peacekeeping operation in the Balkans.

Apart from combat training, the Russian servicemen have acquired a working knowledge of English.

The brigade's personnel come from the 98th and 76th divisions, with a third of officers having had combat experience in Afghanistan and over two thirds in Chechnya, commander of the brigade Colonel Aleksandr Lentsov said.

Twelve commissioned and non-commissioned officers have served in the former Yugoslavia within the U.N. peacekeeping force, according to Lentsov.

Kuril Fishing Rights Plague Russian-Japanese Talks

LD2112203095 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1623 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Dec 21 (Interfax) — The control of fishing around the South Kurils islands remains the stumbling block of the fourth round of Russian-Japanese talks in Moscow, a source in the Russian Committee for Fishing told Interfax Thursday. The talks were to develop an agreement and eventually an interstate treaty on fishing in this area.

Russia wants to put an end to Japanese poaching in its 200-mile economic zone and establish cooperation on mutually profitable conditions. Japan already owes Russia $9 million in fines for poaching along its Pacific coast, the source said.

Japan is reluctant to create joint ventures on the disputed islands, which is what Moscow is seeking. At the same time, the Japanese delegation "raises its requested fishing quotas so much that they exceed any scientific parameters," the source said.

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The source excluded the possibility of signing the Russian-proposed draft agreement on fishing cooperation on December 22, the final day of talks.

Shumeyko Opposes Border Agreement With China

LD2112191295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1810 GMT 21 Dec 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Dec 21 (Interfax) — Russian Federation Council Chairman Vladimir Shumeyko is concerned with the fact that "our western partners and some neighboring states would like to regard Russia as a country which allegedly was defeated and thus lost" its weight in international affairs.

"It is strange that such an approach should find understanding in some of our foreign policy circles. It cannot be tolerated. Russia was never defeated by anyone. Only ourselves can ruin it, if anyone," Shumeyko said in Moscow Thursday, at the constituent conference of the Reforms-New Course movement.

He said that the existing difficulties are often aggravated by "hastily reached and not well thought out decisions," like the agreement on the eastern part of the Russian-Chinese border, signed in May of 1991.

"If the border in the Primorye territory is demarcated as envisaged by the agreement, Russia may soon lose its geostrategic advantages" in the region, Shumeyko said in Moscow Thursday, at the constituent conference of the Reforms - New Course movement.

According to Shumeyko, if the border is revised, China plans to build a port in the mouth of the Tumannaya river with access to the Japanese Sea.

As a result, the existing sea routes and railroads of Primorye will lose their leading role in economic ties between East and West, while China will be able to have active trade with western countries, bypassing the Russian Primorye, said Shumeyko.

Karasin Voices Concern at UN Cyprus Operation

LD2112202295 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1318 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Denis Perkin]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moscow, 21 Dec — "There is concern that, despite its doubtless importance and usefulness, the UN Cyprus operation has effectively become a guarantor of the status quo." This was a statement made today by Grigoriy Karasin, the director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's information and press department. [passage omitted]

As a whole, the "Russian Foreign Ministry is satisfied with the steps taken by the United Nations in Cyprus together with the sides to restore normal conditions of life in both parts of the island," said the diplomat. Karasin recalled that the UN Security Council had repeatedly stated that the present situation was unacceptable. "Everybody concerned should realize that delaying a comprehensive political settlement is not in the interests of either side," he said.

Moscow 'Does Not Recognize' Division of Caspian Sea

LD2112203395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1904 GMT 21 Dec 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Dec 21 (Interfax) — Moscow "does not recognize division of the Caspian Sea into national sectors and rejects any unilateral actions in this direction," deputy director of the Foreign Ministry's Asia Department Maksim Peshkov said in an interview with Interfax.

He was commenting on the statement of Azerbaijan's parliament chairman Rasul Guliyev who said that "every Caspian Sea country possesses sovereignty over its sector of the Caspian Sea."

"We shall always win in a suit for our own sector of the Caspian Sea on the basis of international laws," he said.

To this effect Peshkov said that "there are no international laws to which the Azerbaijani side refers. Such assertions are nothing more than pure bluff."

Peshkov said Russia's Foreign Ministry has twice sent notes to the Azerbaijani side due to its attempts to divide the Caspian Sea into national sectors.

"From the point of view of international law the Caspian Sea is not a sea but a lake. Consequently, one cannot apply such notions of the international sea law as territorial sea, territorial shelf, etc.," Peshkov said.

In line with the existing practice, Peshkov continued, "all issues related to the legal status, regime of natural resources utilization on international lakes are solved by means of an agreement between the coastal states."

According to the diplomat, the Russian side understands that with the collapse of the USSR the situation on the Caspian has changed and a need emerged to adjust its status to the new realities.

"But as along as all the five Caspian states - Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran — have not agreed on the matter, the 1921 and 1940 agreements

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between the USSR and Iran remain in force," Peshkov stressed.

He said under the 1940 agreement the entire territory of the Caspian is free for shipping and fishing, except the 10 mile zone of each of the two countries.

Taleban Seen Likely To Keep Word on Releasing Airmen

MM2212104995 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Dec 95 p 4

[Article by Boris Vinogradov: "Talebs Want To Have Civilized Relations With Russia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] How reliable are the guarantees that 30 December the Talebs will release the crew of the Russian Il-76 aircraft which they seized in the skies over Afghanistan on 3 August? Can we believe the venerable bearded old men from the Kandahar Shura council who promised Foreign Ministry delegation head Yuriy Kotov "to amicably resolve the problem which unexpectedly arose by the end of 1995."

"Even the Central Bank doesn't give guarantees nowadays," Maksim Peshkov, deputy director of the Third Asia Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, told us in a telephone conversation. "But the accords reached at the last meeting make it possible to hope that the seven airmen from the Kazan company 'Aerostan' and also their Il-76 aircraft will be returned home by the end of December. This time the Talebs did not set new conditions. In the presence of high-ranking representatives of the United Nations and the Islamic Conference Organization they stated that they are satisfied with the way Russia reacted to their demands."

Let us remind you that the Talebs seized the Il-76 when it was flying the Tirana-Sharja-Kabul route carrying Chinese-produced ammunition which the Afghan Government had bought in Albania. The following day they accused Russia of interfering in Afghan affairs and supporting "illegal president" Borhanoddin Rabbani. The consultative body of the Talebs — the Shura council — presented a list of 6,080 Afghans allegedly interned in republics of the former USSR at the time of the Afghanistan war and demanded the release of all of them.

For more than two months the Russian Foreign Ministry, the Federal Migration Service, and MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] organs conducted painstaking work on these lists. It transpired that none of the Afghans listed there are on Russian territory. Yuriy Kotov put the conclusions of the working commissions on the negotiating table at the last Kandahar meeting with the Talebs. Furthermore the head of the Russian delegation brought with him a Foreign Ministry statement of noninterference in Afghanistan's internal affairs.

All the indications are that the Talebs were satisfied with this outcome, but they said that they needed at least 10 more days to inform the "missing" Afghans' kith and kin. The same day local newspapers and radio "Taleban" announced the results of the investigations into the list. They pointed out that relatives with documentary evidence of the presence of members of their families in Russia could inform the Shura council by 30 December.

It is quite possible that there will be such people, and this could be used as grounds for continuing the detention of the airmen and further investigation. But this scenario is not very likely, according to Russian diplomats, because the Talebs risk putting themselves even more at odds with the world community, which for a long time now has described the capture of the Russians airliner as "an unlawful act." In the event of procrastination and a refusal to keep their promises they will find themselves in even greater isolation.

This is important to the Talebs. They indeed need the sympathies of the outside world and are trying to look more respectable in the eyes of foreigners. They have proclaimed themselves the "sole legitimate" authorities in Afghanistan and are willy-nilly beginning to adopt civilized manners in international relations.

To get to Kandahar, the Talebs' capital, you have to get a visa from one of the offices they have opened in Sharja (the United Arab Emirates) or Islamabad (Pakistan). They do not recognize other visas, and if you got your "permission" to enter Afghanistan from Kabul you could find yourself in the same position as the unfortunate airmen from the Il-76 crew.

Therefore the Russian diplomats shuttling between Kandahar and Moscow or Kandahar and Kazan have to complete all the immigration formalities prescribed by the "Taleban" movement. And don't doubt the strength of the rules they have set. In this respect there is growing hope that the Talebs are not bluffing and will this time keep their word, presenting the whole show as a humane act.

In the words of medics on the Russian delegation which visited Kandahar this week, our airmen basically feel fine and were overjoyed at the news of their impending release from five months' captivity. Witnesses say that they have established amicable relations with the Talebs both at the Shura council level and with their guards. You can imagine that the parting will be a moving occasion.

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No Estonian-Russian Border Agreement Reached

LD2112170995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1620 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Yelena Yugina]

[FBIS Translated Text] St. Petersburg, 21 Dec — No agreement concerning border issues has been reached in the latest round of talks between Russia and Estonia, official spokesmen from both sides told journalists today. Talks on delimitation (clarification on the map) of borders between the states will continue on 25-26 January in Tallinn.

At the same time, there were some positive results. For example, work has begun on a detailed drawing of border lines, borders in the sea have been measured, and progress has been made on resettling inhabitants in border districts, said Vasiliy Svirin, the head of the Russian delegation and special Foreign ministry envoy. Estonia has also guaranteed those living in areas on the border that they "will not be moved anywhere else."

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Political Issues

Yeltsin Hails 'Major Accomplishments' of Outgoing Duma

LD2212114295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1118 GMT 22 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, December 22 (Itar-Tass) — President Yeltsin has praised the performance of the outgoing State Duma and express hope for the continuity in its work.

The president sent a message to the State Duma, which meets today for the last time. The message stresses that "the two-year period of work of the Russian parliament has been one of major accomplishments on the way of putting into practice the Constitution of the Russian Federation." The president pointed out that "you successfully reached the main target — Russia's transition to the path of civilized parliamentarism — on the basis of constructive cooperation of all the branches of power."

According to Yeltsin, some 300 laws, adopted by the lower chamber of parliament, "are of key importance for the formation of Russia's statehood, the creation of a new judicial system and the economic development of the country in the conditions, which are far from favourable."

He stressed that "forms of practical cooperation in the law-making activities have been found, and coordinating mechanisms have been created." This made it possible to adopt a number of federal constitutional laws and the general part of the Civil Code of the Russian Federation. Major codified legislative acts were drafted. The country's budget for the next year, 1996, was adopted in due time. This constructive cooperation made it possible for the two chambers of the Federal Assembly to make some personnel changes in accordance with norms of the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

"You, esteemed people's deputies, have effectively prepared the ground for the beginning of the work of the new State Duma. Many people's deputies were elected again thanks to their successful law-making activities. All this gives us grounds for hope that there will be continuity in the work of the State Duma," the president wrote.

He called attention to the fact that "not all the problems have been resolved, and there are still many draft laws waiting to be finished and adopted. Duma committees should play a more important role. The problem of the creation of full-scale system-based legislation remains to be resolved. The tasks facing the new State Duma should undoubtedly be fulfilled on the basis of the constructive experience, accumulated by you."

The president thanked MPs for the active and creative work and wished them new accomplishments. The president's message was circulated by his press service.

New Movement To Back Yeltsin at Presidential Elections

LD2112194395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1901 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Dec 21 (Interfax) — The new movement Reforms-New Course will back Russian President Boris Yeltsin at next June's presidential elections provided he takes into consideration the movement's proposals on adjusting the course of reforms. The movement leader, Federation Council Chairman Vladimir Shumeyko, made this statement at a press conference after the movement was officially founded in Moscow Thursday.

"Russia is a presidential republic, and if the president does not change the course, no one else in the country will do so; it means we have to learn the power of influence," he said.

According to Shumeyko, his movement plans to work out proposals on changing the course and submit them to the president so that he takes them into consideration in his next address to the parliament.

If these proposals are included in the address, the movement will back Yeltsin at the 1996 presidential elections, Shumeyko said.

Yeltsin is the most probable of all possible candidates for Russia's presidency, he added.

If the proposals are neglected, "then, unfortunately, we will have to support a presidential candidate who accepts the ideas of our movement," Shumeyko said.

Shumeyko said his movement will hold its next conference within a month to approve the proposals to be submitted to the president.

A nationwide referendum is another way of influencing the course of reforms, he said.

Shumeyko said his movement will develop under the party lines "Democracy, Patriotism, Statehood" and "Russia's Revival and Greatness Is Above Political Differences."

The founding conference was told that the movement had created its branches in 71 regions of Russia. Shumeyko said the network will spread to the former Soviet republics, particularly to Ukraine.

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Karasin: Elections Will Not Affect Foreign Policy

LD2112184595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1623 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Dec 21 (Interfax) — There will be no radical changes in Russian foreign policy in connection with the election of the new State Duma, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Grigoriy Karasin told a briefing in Moscow Thursday [21 December].

"I think that our foreign partners must proceed from the fact" that the president remains in charge of Russian foreign policy, he stressed.

At the same time Karasin said that as the president defines the guidelines on main issues of international and bilateral relations, he will undoubtedly take into consideration Duma deputies' opinions on these issues.

Baburin: Elections Show Chernomyrdin Government Must Resign

LD2112175295 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1400 GMT 21 Dec 95

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Today at the meeting with journalists at the Russian State Duma, Sergey Baburin, the leader of the Power to the People election bloc, shared his views on the past elections.

He said he was happy over the results of the elections. The electorate have voted against the present authorities and the policy of reforms. That is the main thing, he said.

[Begin Baburin recording] The very first measure that this fact has urged, but which above all depends on the leaders of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, is the Chernomyrdin government's resignation and the formation of a new government. The illusion of cosmetic repairs such as the removal of a few ministers — which will allegedly be enough to change the situation — will hardly satisfy the electorate. [end recording]

The patriotic forces of the opposition that have entered the Duma must unite and form the leadership of the lower house. The results of the nationwide vote must be seen as symbolic prior to the presidential elections. Meanwhile, he is convinced that the communists are in a very difficult situation now. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation now have many opponents, while having no permanent allies whatever.

[Begin Baburin recording] Yes, they will say that in some individual issues, they would hope for an alliance with the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, in other issues for an alliance with the Yabloko movement, in third issues even with Russia is Our Home, but responsibility for development of events in the next six months will lie with one specific party. [end recording]

At the new Duma, Power to the People representatives will engage themselves in working toward reduction of taxes and the halting of privatization. They will not be speaking against the denunciation of the Belaya Vega agreements. In conclusion Baburin said he would not be running for president in 1996, but he did not rule out that he might run in the year 2000.

Shumeyko Calls For Change of Direction, Not Government

LD2112180295 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1400 GMT 21 Dec 95

[Report over video by unidentified correspondent; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] Another public movement has joined the endless stream of political parties today. In Moscow a constituent conference of the Russia-wide public movement Reforms-New Policy was held.

[Begin Shumeyko recording] The tasks of our movement lies, among other things, in working toward a radical change of the current policy that is being carried out in Russia now, using civilized and nonconfrontational methods. [end recording]

[Correspondent] That is how Vladimir Shumeyko, the speaker of the Federation Council and a member of the organizational committee of this movement, began his speech. The main point of the report is that the movement does not question the actual need for reforms. Reforms are necessary, but their direction is wrong. Today we need an ideology that is capable of taking Russians out of their apathy. A new policy is needed, which will enable values of democracy and market to be combined with the ethnic peculiarities of the country, the movement says vaguely in the program.

[Begin Shumeyko recording] We are not setting ourselves the task of replacing certain ministers or of replacing the government as a whole. A change of direction is not a change of government. After all, in the government itself, just like among the deputies of the Federal Assembly, there are many people who disagree with the direction of reforms and are prepared to work on changing them. [end recording]

[Correspondent] I just have to add that the conference room was packed full. Delegates from 71 constituent parts of Russia, representatives of parties and political blocs came here. Today the conference is to confirm the movement's program.

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Zyuganov: 'We Want the Soviet Union To Be Rebuilt'

BR2112142595 Madrid EL MUNDO in Spanish 21 Dec 95 pp 4-5

[Commentary by Gennadiy Zyuganov: "Former USSR Must Be Rebuilt"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russia's current situation reminds me a lot of the situation before the 1917 revolution. As in those tumultuous times its leaders can no longer defend the old way of life and the nation refuses to continue supporting it.

Today, 20 million out of a total of 148 million inhabitants have no work at all, 15 million are on the verge of starvation, and there are 6 million refugees. By the same token, 2 million children do not go to school and another million are homeless.

Only once before has Russia been in a similar situation: just after the civil war.

None of the elderly can pay their rents, which are higher than their pensions. No healthy person can carry on living without a job. No marriage can survive on wages which, among other things, make it impossible for them to educate their children.

The current system cannot remain firm at the nation's rudder since its management has turned out to be a total political disaster. Its hasty misadventure in Chechnya was a fiasco and its economic policy has failed resoundingly. And after all this the members of the government had the cheek to name their party in these elections "Our House is Russia."

Just imagine a house in which nobody takes care of the children or the elderly, where everything is squandered and nothing works, where there are no doors and the windows are broken. This is the current Russia, a county where brilliant investigators, writers, and artists feel superfluous, with no place to seek protection.

In addition, Russia does not have a united government. Some members of the cabinet follow President Boris Yeltsin, others follow Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, and the rest follow Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev. Kozyrev is a person who has done everything possible to make his country lose its friends and allies.

Russia is gravely ill. Basic industries are sliding down the hill or even being dismantled. Property is being radically and unfairly redistributed. The ruble exchange rate is kept deliberately low and nothing is being done to stimulate Russian companies.

Nor is agriculture being given the help it needs and all the official bodies in charge of ensuring compliance with the law have been dissolved in order to allow the criminal underworld to prosper.

The bureaucracy is brazenly corrupt and the official policies seem to want to turn all citizens into drunkards, given that the price of vodka has dropped six or eight times compared to the price of bread in recent years.

Both the Russian and Western press are scaring public opinion with the Communist Party's bid to arrive in the Russian Government. They are talking about our supposed proposal to revive the state monopoly. They also present us as extremist nationalists.

To these accusations of nationalism or "national Communism" we reply: Every political party in Russia is condemned to nothingness unless it takes due consideration of the specific cultural and ethnic features of the Russian nation, which is spread across vast territories and which has merged with many other ethnic entities, first in Russia and then in what used to be the Soviet Union.

As for state monopoly, we think that it is no longer feasible. The monopoly on property, power, and information was the main reason for the collapse of the Soviet Union and its Communist Party, and we are fully aware of that.

We are perfectly well aware that this monopoly ruined our country and led its leadership to stagnate and deteriorate in such a way that it ended up flagrantly betraying national interests.

For this reason we favor the coexistence of distinct types of economic structures, giving priority to social and collectively useful models.

We are demanding transparency and pluralism, and we feel strong enough to demonstrate the correctness of our ideas in an open and honest political debate.

To those private entrepreneurs in our country and abroad who are alarmed by the Communist Party's victory in the recent elections, we say: Stay calm, because you will have more attractive conditions for your investment, and for broader trade contacts and guarantees on the usufruct of your legal profits. Moreover, you will be protected from the mushrooming mafia.

The Russian Communist Party feels that its key objective in the parliamentary elections is to win over to its side the biggest possible number of people by convincing them that there are forces in the country capable of stopping the current disaster.

As we see it, the correlation between the legislative and executive branches of government is capable of a major improvement. What Russia needs is a strong

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government under legislative control. The current social and economic policies must be radically changed. The personal welfare of the population in general is one of our main priorities, because otherwise a lot of people will not even survive this winter.

We have prepared programs for financial and economic stabilization, as well as programs to fight crime, banditry, and corruption.

One of our main challenges is to reunite the Russian nation, which was conquered on a number of occasions, but never divided as it is today, when 25 million of our compatriots are living abroad. We want the Soviet Union to be reunited step by step through voluntary agreements.

We have worked out a series of initiatives to submit at the next legislative session and we also have a program for national stabilization to be implemented in the event that the Communist candidate wins the presidential election next June.

Zyuganov 'Evasive' on Commitment to Democratic Principles

BR2112135295 Turin LA STAMPA in Italian 21 Dec 95 p 9

[Report by Giulietto Chiesa on Gennadiy Zyuganov, Communist Party of the Russian Federation leader, news conference in Moscow on 20 December: "'Are You Democratic?' — And Zyuganov Failed To Answer"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moscow — [passage omitted] He met with journalists in the Duma. [passage omitted] The questions flew, but there was one, ours, which did not go down too well with Zyuganov. Tell us, Gennadiy Andreyevich, if the choice of Russia's Communists is for the parliamentary path, alternation in government, the sharing of power, a rule-of-law state, personal freedom, freedom in enterprise, and the defense of private property.

His reply was long, polemical, and evasive. "Do you call what we are living in today a democracy? Is this freedom of expression, when the mass media lie systematically and deceive public opinion?"

"Yes, the CPSU came to a bad end," he added, "because among other things it claimed to have a monopoly on truth. We will not make that mistake again." But he ignored the part of the question regarding a rule-of-law state and failed to answer the part on the parliamentary path. [passage omitted]

The conference ended and one of the officials in his entourage, an old acquaintance from CPSU days, reprimanded me with an irritated look on his face: "What bourgeois questions!" Whatever Zyuganov may say, Soviet communism's old dogmatic face was very much in evidence behind the desk he had just been sitting at. [passage omitted]

Zhirinovskiy Predicts 'Conflagration' if NATO Expands

AU2112153295 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 20 Dec 95 pp 1,10

[Interview with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, by Ivan Drabek in Moscow; date not given: "V. Zhirinovskiy: 'I Consider Second Place To Be a Victory'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Drabek] According to the preliminary results, your Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) won just under 11 percent of the vote in Sunday's [17 December] parliamentary elections. This is about 50 percent less than two years ago, but twice as much as the polls were predicting. Are you satisfied?

[Zhirinovskiy] I also consider second place to be a victory. If it had not been for the conspiracy between the communists and the agrarian party, which sold them its votes, the Zyuganovites would not have won more than us. If we take into consideration the fact that the results were falsified in all of the regions from Sakhalin to Kaliningrad and that official propaganda has been besmirching us for two years, then our result is outstanding.

[Drabek] Despite this, only 6.5 million voters voted for you, while it was 13 million two years ago. Observers are predicting that it was your former supporters that have now strengthened the communists' camp...

[Zhirinovskiy] The LDPR is supported by the young in particular. We won the last parliamentary elections in a big way, but what changed? They did not even let us into the ante-chamber of power; not one minister, not one senior official was from the LDPR. Young people know that the real elections will not be until 16 June next year when the presidency will be decided upon. An army of pensioners supported the communists. They did not have to sleep off Saturday's disco, they do not have to study for exams. Even the bitter winter did not stop them from going to vote out of nostalgia for their youth. If, however, they were expecting a revolution to come out of their votes, they will be very disappointed. Chernomyrdin will replace three or four ministers at the most and that will be that.

[Drabek] Some observers are juxtaposing the drop in your votes with the LDPR's categorical stance on Chechnya.

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[Zhirinovskiy] Yes, we lost votes in the northern Caucasus. But remember, if it had not been for us, the Russian Army may not have been in Chechnya; there would be no one there to keep order. The instability would have spread to neighboring northern Caucasian republics and also to the southern Russian regions. The party may lose votes in protecting the whole of Russia. It was the same with Kutuzov when he lost Moscow for a time, but he saved the Russian Army. And, it routed the French shortly afterwards. By the way, our losses will be compensated for in the second count. As only four parties were successful on the party lists of candidates, the forfeited votes will be divided. In the final analysis, we will evidently have the same number — 55 mandates — as in the previous State Duma.

[Drabek] Will you form a joint bloc with anyone in the new State Duma? What are your party's most immediate aims?

[Zhirinovskiy] We are not prepared to collude with anyone. We will, however, support a proposal from any faction that would boost the state, the economy, and democracy. We have convened our party's seventh congress for 10 January. Its task will be to nominate a candidate for the June presidential elections. Thus, our fourth election campaign in a row will commence. The communist Zyuganov and even the so-called democrat Yavlinskiy will not stand a chance. The only rival worthy of me could be the current president; true, if he is well. I envisage, however, that in February, when Boris Nikolayevich should announce his candidacy, he will merely announce an extension of his sick leave. In this event, it would be a Zyuganov-Zhirinovskiy finale. Our victory will be clear. Then, in December 1999, we will win an absolute majority in the State Duma and a 20-year period of prosperity will begin in Russia — without communism, without fascism, and without the European economic and democratic model. We will not threaten anyone. We will not take one step toward the West. We have the ocean to the east and north and we will end all wars in the south.

[Drabek] If you were to become president in June, what kind of stance would you adopt on NATO's enlargement toward the East? And, what do you think of the Slovak Republic's standing in Europe?

[Zhirinovskiy] The West has deceived us, since the Warsaw Pact was dissolved and NATO remained. It is still beefing itself up and wants to come closer to our borders. This will lead to war. We, however, will not tolerate a repetition of 22 June 1941. Therefore, the conflagration will erupt in Eastern Europe. The bombs will fall on Poland, Hungary, Romania, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. The small countries will suffer again. I think that Slovakia has to be closer to us. If it joins NATO, it will perish. Unfortunately, I only have very weak contacts with the Slovak political entities. I once had an invitation to visit Slovakia; I could not go at that time. I do not yet have a fresh invitation.

Zhirinovskiy Sees LDPR 'Key Role' in New Duma

AU2212111595 Munich DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG in German 22 Dec 95 pp 3-4

[Interview with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, by an unidentified DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG correspondent; place and date not given: "We Are Playing The Key Role"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG] Mr. Zhirinovskiy, let me first congratulate you on the Liberal Democratic Party's strong presence in the new Duma.

[Zhirinovskiy] I thank you for your good wishes, also on behalf of the millions of Russians who voted for us. I would like to send my regards to all our German friends.

[DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG] Almost all the established media in the FRG said that you would fail completely in the Russian elections.

[Zhirinovskiy] Please convey my sincerest sympathy to the ladies and gentlemen of BILD, STERN, German television, etc., for having issued the death certificates for myself and my Liberal Democrats completely in vain again.

[DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG] We will pass it on. But what is your opinion on the Russian election result?

[Zhirinovskiy] This time they sent in three times as many parties and groups against us than in the last elections. But we have beaten all those that were put on to me in particular.

"Nothing Works Without Us"

[DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG] What exactly do you mean by that?

[Zhirinovskiy] You must know that many little Zhirinovskiys turned up in the election campaign over the past few months. These people all of a sudden said exactly what I have been saying for two or three years. With this trick they wanted to bring me down, cut the ground from under my feet, possibly prevent us from re-entering the Duma. That did not work out. We have been able to stand our ground.

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[DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG] What about the Communists?

[Zhirinovskiy] From a social point of view, there are worlds between me and the Russian Communists. But to explain the situation to the German people, I must add that the Communists in our country spread national slogans and demands that would be called "right-wing extremist" in Germany. The most important thing is: We Liberal Democrats are playing the decisive role between the so-called reformers and the Communists in the Duma. Nobody can ignore us, nothing works without us. Nobody can achieve anything without us. We are playing the key role.

"I Will Run for President"

[DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG] Are you still planning to make a bid for power in next June's presidential elections?

[Zhirinovskiy] Yes, of course. The Duma election has encouraged me. The competition, which has also been promoted vigorously by your media, has not passed the dress rehearsal. But also through our direct seats, which allow us to send many additional people to the Duma, we will be able to conduct a powerful policy. Our starting conditions for the presidential elections are excellent.

Media Campaign Poisons Atmosphere

[DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG] In your Moscow Declaration, which you delivered together with German People's Union Chairman Dr. Frey, you announced a close German-Russian partnership. Are you sticking to that?

[Zhirinovskiy] By all means. I am sticking to it, even if the media campaigners in Germany are trying hard to poison the atmosphere. I am sending my regards to my friend Dr. Frey, the German People's Union, and all Germans who are in favor of a German-Russian partnership.

[DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG] Certain media in Germany have voiced concerns that you are aiming at a "German-Russian axis" and want to divide Europe into a German and a Russian sphere of influence.

[Zhirinovskiy] There is only one region in the whole world, namely the FRG, where leading media are annoyed about the prospect of their own country gaining more influence. That not only distinguishes Germany from Russia, France, or the United States, but also from Andorra, San Marino, and even the Kanakas in the South Seas.

[DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG] Thank you very much for the interview. We wish you and the other deputies of the Liberal Democrats in the new Duma every success!

Zhirinovskiy on New Duma, FSU Restoration

LD2212075195 Tehran IRNA in English 0739 GMT 22 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Dec. 22, IRNA — Leader of the Russian ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR) Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, here Thursday blamed the reformists for bringing poverty into the country and paving the way for the victory of the Communists in recent parliamentary elections as a result of their wrong policies.

In an exclusive interview with IRNA in Moscow, he said he would not cooperate with the Communists in the next Duma due to their reactionary stands and would keep distance with the democrats because of their pro-Western tendency and ignoring Russia's strategic interests.

He underlined the need for restoration of unity to the former Soviet Union [FSU] and called on the Moscow government to impose economic pressures on the republics which refuse to form the new union.

Zhirnovskiy said at present Armenia, Tajikistan, Belarus, Ukraine, Abkhazia and, Russian populated areas in northern Kazakhstan are ready to become members of the union.

He said at the first session of the next State Duma, he would call for the resignation of the Russian Foreign Minister, Andrey Kozyrev, as the Russian foreign policy in many occasions has proven not successful.

Foreign Intelligence Chief Addresses 75th Anniversary

LD2112190995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1555 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By Olga Semenova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, December 21 (Itar-Tass) — Foreign Intelligence Chief Yevgeniy Primakov has addressed a jubilee session today devoted to the 75th anniversary of the Foreign Intelligence Service.

"We have firmly embarked on a constitutional way of any possible changes in the political power," said Primakov, commenting on the results of the elections to the State Duma held on December 17.

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He pointed out that the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service was marking its jubilee in a difficult period of the formation of new Russian statehood. "The recent elections to the State Duma have shown that Russia is steadily going ahead towards democracy with political pluralism being one of its cornerstones," Primakov said.

The Foreign Intelligence chief believes that Russia's state interests should be protected "regardless of the correlation between internal political forces," and orientates the staff of the Foreign Intelligence Service to the fulfillment of this task.

Primakov said that the task of priority importance under principally new conditions created after the collapse of the former Soviet Union is to prevent the establishment of a single - polar world, without undermining stability reached on global scale.

Primakov noted that in the period of the confrontation between two ideological blocs "there was one barricade in principle which put different states on the opposite sides of the barricade, while at present, the number of such barricades has considerably increased. Earlier, this confrontation rested an ideological basis. Now, there is a multitude of barricades based on differences in state interests," Primakov noted.

"The intelligence should cover all 'azimuths' where Russia's interests are concerned," he stressed.

Scope, Structure of Organized Crime Eyed

MM2212104595 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 21 Dec 95 p 1

[Report on interview with Colonel B.A. Kuznechik, chief of the Tver branch of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs Moscow Institute, by correspondent Yuriy Burov; place, date not given: "Colonel B.A. Kuznechik on Scale of Organized Crime — Oppressed by the Godfathers"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A scientific and practical conference on problems of countering organized crime has been held in Tver.

The choice of venue was no accident. The point is that the Tver branch of the Russian MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] Moscow Institute trains personnel in combating this criminal misfortune. Specialists in combating corruption and the leaders of Special Rapid Response Detachments improve their skills there. SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA correspondent Yuriy Burov asked Col. B.A. Kuznechik, chief of the branch, to describe the results of the conference and to share his views on the matters that were raised.

The need for such a meeting between academics and people with practical experience, Boris Aleksandrovich says, was dictated primarily by the fact that organized crime is becoming more sophisticated, I would say, with every hour, is developing with unprecedented speed and dynamism, and is assuming an increasingly menacing scale. But when it comes to how to counter it more effectively, there are more questions than answers. Right, let's begin with the simplest of them, for instance. Let us take two territories. In one law enforcement agencies have not uncovered criminal groupings, clans, and formations. Since there are none of these, organized crime itself apparently does not exist. And the leaders of the structures specially set up to combat it are held in great esteem.

In the other region more criminal groups have been uncovered than in the neighboring area, and instead of gratitude the officers of law enforcement agencies often come in for criticism, because their region has a bad reputation in the country. So choose how to organize matters.

The vagueness of criteria clearly makes it difficult to reveal the true picture. And it is obviously no accident that the conference participants emphasized that published statistics are still a very long way from showing the true scale of criminal oppression. But it is possible to judge many parameters of the criminalization of life even from the information that we nevertheless have at our disposal. According to the MVD research institute, the entire territory of Russia is controlled by over 6,000 criminal groupings. They differ in size. The major ones have a "staff" of 100 or more. In Moscow, Yekaterinburg, St. Petersburg, and other big cities organized crime has a key position in the economy. Last year, according to specialists' estimates, the capital of "shady operators" was more than one-fourth of GNP.

Groupings are formed on various bases. Territorial groupings are the most common: There are over 30 in Moscow alone. They include one whose "staff" consists mostly of former professional sportsmen and Spetsnaz servicemen. The St. Petersburg community is big: It has 2,000 soldiers [boyeviki] alone.... Or take the Far Eastern "Politburo," which controls salmon fishing (the caviar business), timber procurement, and port deals. There are ethnic groupings: Chechen, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgian.... There are also so- called professional groupings. Practice shows that it is precisely criminal elements that have been most receptive to the market economy. It is primarily they who have taken advantage of the fruits of privatization and the destatization of property, and on every territory, in the territory's key sectors. For instance, in Tyumen organized "controllers" latched onto the extraction of oil and gas,

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in the Urals they latched onto spheres working with rare earth elements and metals, and in Sochi they control tourism, video rental, and prostitution.

As the conference noted, "intellectual" criminal groupings controlling insurance companies, credit establishments, and commercial banks pose a particular danger today. Criminal communities siphon off huge funds via them — it is a question now of many billions or trillions of rubles.

It is not surprising that banks are such a magnet to the groupings. On the one hand a number of them provide the opportunity to "launder" accumulated funds, and on the other they pay out considerable profits. So almost the hottest "front" nowadays is the banking sphere. According to the MVD Main Administration for Combating Economic Crime, the credit and financial system is in second place in terms of embezzlement in the economic sphere and in first place in terms of the acquisition of money by means of fraud. Crimes in this sector are subdivided into two main groups: those perpetrated against banks and those that are perpetrated by banks themselves or by using them. Here are just the facts that have been uncovered. Staffers of the credit and financial system have themselves committed over 3,000 swindles. This is twice as many as in trade and industry.

Of course, bankers themselves are also victims. In the past year alone around 100 of them have been killed.... And the bullets, poison, or bombs usually get officials of commercial banks. As a rule, these crimes are still not cleared up at all, despite all the endeavors of operations officers, investigators, and the prosecutor's office. One of the reasons is that there is no help from witnesses — vice presidents, accountants, cashiers, secretaries, bodyguards. Citing commercial secrecy, they all refuse to give the investigation any information. They even conceal the source of the bank's original capital. Although it is evident from operational information that the launch capital is often provided by criminal structures. In general the credit and banking sphere is a very extensive test range for various offenses. You would think that the following rule ought to apply strictly: No one should attract money from the population without a license. But even now, when the number of duped investors runs into tens of millions, around 450 non-banking organizations which have no licenses but which nevertheless collect money from a trusting population are continuing to operate in the country. Or take the universal phenomenon of the nonrepayment of loans. The losses are tremendous, but such cases are not even examined under criminal procedure but are merely the subject of arbitration disputes.

The organizers and perpetrators of such crimes have an extremely high level of training in the sphere of accounting and finance and technical and scientific support, instantly grasp the processes that are taking place, preempt the formation of the legislative infrastructure and devise more and more new methods of economic crimes, and cleverly evade punishment. And we — I am referring to the entire system for training specialists in combating organized crime and corruption — are rightly criticized because we are still not training higher-grade specialists who can effectively counter crimes in the credit and financial sphere. Furthermore, our specialists are less well equipped in terms of technology than the people they are supposed to catch.

The organized criminal community today is a complex hierarchical formation. It includes direct perpetrators and superstructure components that carry out control, protection, and ideological management functions. As a rule, the top brass in these communities are beyond the reach of the law. In other words, a criminal bureaucracy has emerged.

It is the belief among operations officers that many criminal groupings have their own high-ranking officials or deputies at various levels. In a number of cases deputies are actually preferable, since they can lobby against decisions that are dangerous for their "employers." Journalists are not unsullied either. According to operational information, numerous representatives of this profession are at the beck and call of criminals. They do not do this for free, of course. They write articles praising the leaders of groupings. About their generous charitable activities, about their construction of "free" housing, about what wonderful family men they are — all in all, simply angels. Attempts to institute criminal proceedings against such mercenary journalists are difficult: The bandits do not establish contact with ordinary journalists....

Nevertheless, the conference's recommendations contain the following point addressed to legislators: "Provision should be made for criminal penalties for actions aiding the activities of organized criminal formations."

Our speakers made a clear-cut division of all groupings into two types — purely criminal (racketeering, robbery, theft) and those that engage exclusively in financial and commercial activities. It is the latter that pose a particular danger to society, the conference admitted. Because on the basis of them it is proposed — indeed, the process has already begun — to form large-scale mafia empires that will control entire spheres of the economy and industry. In experts' opinion, a further increase in the activities of criminal groupings in the financial and credit system, the fuel and energy business,

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and the privatization sphere can be expected. Banks and commercial structures will continue to work to "launder" criminal capital. Therefore the "open season" on major bankers and businessmen will continue. The massive buying up of enterprise securities will continue, and the main purchasers will be representatives of ethnic groupings and front men for foreign mafiosi. Their leaders will gain even greater opportunities to influence the processes of privatization and flotation, acquiring power over Russia's resources. These were the opinions expressed at the conference.

However, the discussion was not only about operations involving real estate and capital, but also about the threat to the nation's gene pool. The male population is degenerating, getting drunk on cheap alcohol substitutes (the mass production and delivery of these is one part of criminal business). The export abroad of our girls and young women is also increasing in scale. Prostitution, pornography, and the drugs trade are flourishing.

The speakers also struck some optimistic notes. For instance, it was noted that over the last 18 months around 18,000 criminal groups have come to the notice of internal affairs organs, and the activity of over 12,000 of them has been stopped. Thousands of firearms and a great deal of ammunition and explosives have been removed from circulation. The infrastructure for the fight against organized crime is improving, albeit more slowly than we would like. Specialized structures are gaining experience and their level of training and ability to "outsmart" even the most sophisticated criminals are improving.

So there are some changes for the better. While in no way exaggerating them, specialists formulated the conditions whereby they will become much more marked and will help the cardinal solution of the problem. The conference deemed it necessary to restore the machinery for social promotion of law and order: people's control, an objective press, and voluntary formations. Legal reform (the adoption of the criminal code and code of criminal procedure and of the law on the fight against organized crime and corruption) must be accelerated in every possible way. Criminological expert assessment of laws adopted by the State Duma, presidential edicts, and government decrees must be established as swiftly as possible. Without this there is no point in speaking of a reliable system for combating organized crime and corruption.

After the conference journalists asked me: "How will the godfathers of criminal Russia view its decisions?" And hadn't these godfathers offered to share resources in order to impose law and order? I thanked the questioners for their bitter humor. But it had to be admitted that these questions did not arise in a vacuum, especially when you consider that our police officers and those of some law enforcement agencies do not receive their wages for months on end and that subunits called upon to counter criminal structures equipped with the last word in technology sometimes do not even have the money to buy cartridges for shooting practice. There have indeed been offers of "help" from criminal structures — the questioners clearly knew this. But it would naturally be impermissible to take advantage of them in any circumstances. I am convinced that the state must find the requisite funds for waging a resolute battle against organized crime.

Media Issues

Yeltsin Rejects Law on Reorganizing Radio, TV

LD2112163095 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1530 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 21 Dec [ITAR-TASS] — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has rejected the "Federal Law On Reorganizing, Privatizing, and Liquidating State Television and Radio Broadcasting Organizations in the Russian Federation" in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation Part III, Article 107. This was stated in a message from the president to Ivan Rybkin, chairman of the State Duma, the text of which the head of state's press service sent to ITAR-TASS today.

The law was passed by the State Duma on 24 November and handed on to the Federation Council which ratified it on 9 December 1995. The document established that "the state television and radio broadcasting organizations in Russia are reorganized, privatized, and liquidated in according with the conditions and procedures set by federal law with the aim of maintaining a system of state television and radio broadcasting which guarantees citizens and public organizations equal access to the mass media."

Before such a law is passed, the document said, it is necessary to "suspend the reorganization of state television and radio broadcasting organizations." The law asked the president and government of the Russian Federation to "bring legal bills on reorganizing, privatizing, and liquidating state television and radio broadcasting organizations including those linked to the creation of the Russian Public TV joint-stock company into line with the adopted law. [no closing quotation marks as received]

The president has deemed it impossible to sign the federal law submitted to him since, in his opinion, several clauses in its articles do not conform with

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articles of the civil code of Russia and violate clauses in several articles of the Russian Constitution.

New Aerospace Journal Published; Soskovets Comments

LD2212102195 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0953 GMT 22 Dec 95

[By Yevgeniy Nikitin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW December 22 (Itar-Tass) — The first issue of the new publication, Aerospace Journal, went of the press.

Addressing the readership, Oleg Soskovets, Russian First Deputy Prime Minister, writes: "The present state of the aerospace industry and air transport, the work of research centres of these areas largely determine the strength of Russia's international positions and security, its economic potential, and the pace of its scientific and technological progress."

The publication meant for specialists and business people is devoted to the aerospace industry and to air transport and sciences in the area.

The publishers hope that Aerospace Journal will fuller show the potential of Russian producers of aircraft and space equipment. All the items are in Russian and in English.

Federal Assembly

Federation Council To Discuss Bosnia Peacekeepers

LD2112174595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1357 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Dec 21 (Interfax) — The Federation Council will consider the issue of sending Russian peacekeepers to Bosnia at its session scheduled for January 5, 1996, chairman of the Federation Council Security and Defense Committee Petr Shirshov told Interfax Thursday.

The Federation Council received Russian President Boris Yeltsin's letter with a request to consider this issue.

Representatives of the Federation Council are in former Yugoslavia now, Shirshov said. They are scheduled to meet with official representatives of the warring parties in order to discuss issues related to stationing of the Russian contingent in the Balkans.

"Adopting any decision on sending a Russian contingent to Bosnia, the Federation Council will be guided not only by proposals of the Russian Foreign and Defense Ministries but by the opinion of Zagreb, Belgrade, and Sarajevo, which members of the Federation Council now in Yugoslavia will submit to the chamber," Shirshov noted.

The Federation Council mandate for the Russian contingent of "blue helmets" transferred to the NATO operation expired on November 30. The servicemen were granted two more months to solve technical issues related to withdrawal of military equipment and personnel from the conflict zone.

Russia plans to send about 2,500 servicemen to Bosnia.

As many as 1,500 Russian servicemen will take part in the first stage of the operation, disengagement of the warring parties. About 1,000 more Russian "blue helmets" will join them at the second stage, clearing mines, restoring vital facilities, and delivering humanitarian cargo.

An independent airborne brigade which was formed on the basis of the 98th and 76th airborne divisions will take part in the first stage of this operation. It will be divided into two battalions.

Russia's independent airborne brigade will work with the U.S. first armored brigade to disengage the warring parties and enforce the ceasefire regime in the northern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina near Brcko, Zvornik, and Tuzla.

Colonel Aleksandr Lentsov will command the brigade.

Rybkin Outlines Plans for Final Duma Meeting

LD2112135595 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1212 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By Ivan Novikov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, December 21 (Itar-Tass) — The State Duma of the first convocation is not going to become a part of history before discussing one of the key draft laws, the second part of the Civil Code, which is described as the "economic Constitution" of the country. The question of passing the code in the second and third readings will be raised at the final meeting of the lower house which is to be held on the decision of the Duma Council on Friday, December 22. Duma Speaker Ivan Rybkin said this to correspondents after the council meeting on Thursday.

In addition, he said the lower house "will try to overcome the Federation Council's veto on amendments to the law on veterans and amendments to the law on the military service."

Rybkin said that the question of material support and medical services for the family of deputy Vitaliy Savitskiy who died in a road accident will also be discussed.

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Senate Rejection Ends Stand-Off on Military Draft

MM2112134395 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 21 Dec 95 p 1

[Report by Petr Karapetyan: "Disputes Over Draft Law Over: The Federation Council Has Repealed the Amendments Proposed by the Former Duma"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The confrontation between the State Duma and the Federation Council, which held diametrically opposed views on the law on military service, ended 19 December, when the upper chamber rejected the Duma's amendments to the law by a majority of votes. Let us recall the main dates in this confrontation.

On 7 April 1995 the State Duma adopted the Federal Law "On Making Changes and Additions to the Russian Federation Law 'On the Military Service Obligation and Military Service.'" On 29 April the Federation Council approved and President Boris Yeltsin signed this law, which makes it possible to increase the manning levels of the Armed Forces and other troops to 85-90 percent.

On 20 July 1995 the State Duma adopted three laws which completely rule out changes and additions to the law and additionally introduce a new term of service (18 instead of 24 months) for inducted servicemen taking part in armed conflicts. The adoption of these laws would lower the manning level of the army to an unacceptably low 60 percent. On 4 October 1995, mindful of the opinion of the government and the leaders of all ministries and departments with troops, the Federation Council rejected these laws.

On 15 November 1995 the State Duma reexamined them and, overriding the Federation Council veto, sent the laws to President Yeltsin for his signature.

On 3 December 1995 the president, in view of the lack of compliance with provisions of the Constitution, sent the laws back without examination. At the same time, with the aim of affording social protection to servicemen who are taking (have taken) part in combat operations and are carrying out (have carried out) tasks in conditions of armed conflict, the president signed Edict No. 1213 on the discharge of this category of serviceman from military service. Here the term of their military service is to be at least 18 months and their time spent in conditions of armed conflict one or less than one month if they are wounded or suffer concussive or disabling injury.

On 8 December 1995 the members of the Duma adopted a new package of federal laws whose contents were almost the same as in the aforementioned laws but included changes determining the procedure for awarding officer rank to graduates of state higher educational institutions who have taken part in the officer reserve training program at departments of military science and had not performed military service prior to 4 May 1995. The law envisaged the restoration of deferment of the draft to persons who have a sole parent who is older than 52.

On 19 December the Federation Council rejected this law by a majority vote. The disputes about the draft are thus over. We can only hope that the new State Duma, instead of introducing endless amendments to the law now in operation and the adopted changes and additions to it, will finally adopt the already drafted Law "On the Military Service Obligation and Military Service."

The Federation Council has, as people will know, endorsed the 1996 federal budget. Total defense expenditure is a little over 80 trillion rubles [R], whereas the Russian Federation Defense Ministry had asked for more than R100 trillion.

Regional Affairs

Steps To Resolve Kaliningrad Rural Crisis Discussed

WS2112134595 Kaliningrad KALININGRADSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 7 Dec 95 p 1

[Report by R. Minakova: "To Resolve the Crisis in the Rural Areas"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Kaliningrad Oblast Economic Council, headed by Kalingrad Oblast Administration head Yuriy Matochkin, has met to assess estimates of agricultural production in 1996, to analyze the performance of the oblast agroindustrial complex [APK] from 1993-1995, and to discuss opportunities for financing the APK from the oblast budget in 1996.

L. Demachev, Kalingrad Oblast Administration deputy head; M. Khovanskiy and L. Sergeyev, heads of Kaliningrad Oblast Offices for Agricultural Issues and Finances, and other oblast leaders participated in the work of the council.

M. Khovanskiy pointed out that "the situation in rural areas is critical, but there are no expectations that stabilization of agricultural production will take place next year." In the opinion of participants in the meeting, the reasons for this situation are not only in the slow implementation of reform in rural areas, but primarily in the fact that today the agricultural sector is, in fact, doomed to survive alone, without any state support. L. Sergeyev said that 80 percent of financing of the agricultural sector has been "shifted" from the federal budget to budgets of the Russian Federation subjects. As regards the oblast budget, it — no matter how you divide

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it — cannot render full-fledged financial assistance to rural areas. As a result, residents of rural areas (in some places, agricultural workers have not received their wages over a year and their wages have been compensated for by payments "in kind"), APK chiefs, oblast leaders, and consumers also have been driven into a corner. The easiest thing in the current situation is to call for help, but the most logical thing is to look for ways out of the blind alley. One must work.

The Economic Council has proposed to focus on measures envisaging the most effective return from investments of money from the oblast budget and how to obtain quick results from the implementation of new forms of economic management. These measures and forms of economic management in particular include the establishment of a whole-sale market for food staffs and a viable producing-processing complex; the construction of enterprises to process agricultural products; financial support for farm producers that are afloat on their own; the reorganization of "sick" farms; the creation of proper conditions for agricultural workers to sell their products not only in rural areas but also in the oblast center (there should be a network of shops); and the allocation of credits to promising agricultural producers.

A working group headed by Kalingrad Oblast Administration head Yuriy Matochkin was established at the meeting of the Economic Council. There were proposals to include Oblast Duma Deputies A. Trifonov, V. Plyakin, and A. Stepanov, well-known farmers, into this group to jointly draft options for resolving the crisis in rural areas and to introduce proposals to the program for the development of the agricultural sector in the coming years. There are plans to hold the meeting of the working group after 20 December. Before 20 December, Kalingrad Oblast Administration head Yuriy Matochkin will meet with workers of the oblast APK at their meeting and visit some farms.

Northern Yards Launch New Rig, Submarine

MM2112143295 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 21 Dec 95

[Report by Fedor Sizyy: "You Can Find Oil on the Seabed. Gazprom Has Again Demonstrated That Its Priorities Lie in Cooperation with the Russian Defense Industry" — from the "Business Tuesday" supplement p 2]

[FBIS Translated Text] Arkhangelsk Oblast — Academician Yevgeniy Velikhov was as pleased as Punch at the celebrations. Simultaneously at the two giant military-industrial complex shipyards in Severodvinsk an event occurred that attracted visitors not only from the Russian regions, but also from Ukraine, Australia, Britain, Norway, and Finland. At the Severnoye machine-building enterprise, which used to specialize in building nuclear submarines, they laid the foundation of the first ice-resistant fixed offshore platform to develop the Prirazlomnoye oil field.

From the "Business Tuesday" dossier:

The total weight of the ice-resistant fixed platform will be nearly 81,000 tonnes; length — 126 meters; width — 126 meters; height (not counting the drilling rigs) — 61 meters. Western specialists estimate that to build such a platform in the time stipulated by the contract, Britain, for example, would have to employ 80 percent of its capacities specializing in this type of construction.

At the "Zvezdochka" plant, where the world's first nuclear-powered icebreaker, the "Lenin," was overhauled and refitted in the late sixties, they have now laid the foundation for a self-raising drilling rig for exploratory work on the Arctic shelf. Essentially, this is the first serious civilian order for enterprises that were originally designed to build nuclear submarines.

"We spent a long time looking for a reliable partner to develop the shelf's deposits," Rem Vyakhirev, chairman of the board of the Gazprom Russian joint-stock company, explained. "The easiest thing to do would be to hire someone from outside and buy the equipment ready-made abroad. But we plowed our own, Russian furrow. Thanks are due to Academician Yevgeniy Velikhov for introducing us to the shipbuilders.. I believe a third historical phase has now arrived for Arkhangelsk Oblast. The first was when Czar Peter laid the foundation for the Russian navy here. The second was when several decades ago the first submarines came down the Severodvinsk building slips. Now the local shipbuilders are using their knowledge and expertise to build structures that will put the North's new resources to the service of Russia."

Rosshelf President Academician Yevgeniy Velikhov has reason to be happy. In the first place, the Russian company has a state license to develop the Prirazlomnoye oil field. Incidentally, the Gazprom Russian joint-stock company has a controlling block of shares in the Rosshelf joint-stock company — which provides guarantees of the stable development of shelf oil and gas stocks. Second, a real step has been taken toward establishing production of Russian equipment on the basis of the unique, high-technology expertise of the military-industrial complex.

From the "Business Tuesday" dossier:

The Prirazlomnoye oil field was opened in 1989. It is located in the Pechora Sea, 60 km offshore. The proven stocks of oil will make it possible to operate the field

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for 20 years. Daily production will be 15,000-17,000 tonnes.

"The Prirazlomnoye oil field is the first project for the development of the Arctic shelf. The field is unique in Arkhangelsk Oblast and in the country: It provides an opportunity for embarking on the development of a new industry for Russia. And it is an opportunity for the entire nuclear shipbuilding complex. This is the way one should look at Prirazlomnoye, not just as extra gas and oil," Yevgeniy Velikhov believes. "Despite our very small capital investment in the 'Zvedochka' and 'Sevmashpredpriyatiye' plants in Severodvinsk, they are the basis of a new industry which Russia has never seen before."

It is worth noting that the implementation of the Gazprom order will involve around one-half of the work force at Zvezdochka and Sevmashpredpriyatiye. According to Boris Nikitin, a member of the Gazprom Russian joint-stock company board, in the future two-thirds of the work force of these enterprises will be engaged in producing equipment for the development of offshore fields. Designers in the Urals, St. Petersburg, Sevastopol, Novgorod, and Moscow are involved in the unique project.... So the development of the shelf is providing real work for tens of thousands of people in the defense industry, which in the present situation is more than opportune.

Stop Press:

Our correspondent Igor Yelkov reports yet another event has occurred in the center of the nuclear shipbuilding industry. The submarine cruiser "Vepr" (KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA wrote about an incident involving it in a piece entitled "There is No Animal More Fearsome Than a Hungry 'Vepr' [wild boar] in Russia") has successfully undergone state trials and has been passed on to the Northern Fleet.

Presidential Rule To Be Preserved in Chuvash Republic

LD2112205195 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1453 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valentina Ivanova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cheboksary, 21 Dec — Presidential rule in the Chuvash Republic will be preserved — such is the result of the referendum that was held in the republic simultaneously with the elections to the State Duma. According to a statement that was circulated today by the Chuvash Central Electoral Commission, more than half a million people, or 59 percent of the electorate, took part in the poll. Their votes were split almost equally with a slight advantage about 4,000 votes in favor of presidential rule.

The State Council had appointed the referendum by the demand of a pressure group that managed to collect the sufficient number of signatures.

Chechen 'Sabotage' Suspected in Kardino Gas Main Accident

LD2212092195 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0800 GMT 22 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A major accident occurred Thursday evening on a gas pipeline in Kabardino-Balkaria. Experts allege this may have been an act of sabotage by Chechen militants, an INTERFAX correspondent has reported from the republic. As a result, gas supplies to the health spa town of Mineralnyye Vody have become irregular. Gas is being supplied from reserve pipelines. Repair teams have begun restoring the pipeline, but the scale of the accident makes it difficult to fix it fast.

Oil Interests Seen Resolving Chechnya War

MM2212115795 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Dec 95 p 2

[Article by Boris Vinogradov: "The War in Chechnya Could Be Extinguished by Caspian Oil"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russia has given guarantees through its Transneft Company that it will ensure the stable pumping of "early" oil along the Baku-Groznyy-Novorossiysk pipeline from the Caspian fields at Gyuneshli, Chirag, and Azeri, where an international consortium is developing work.

An intergovernmental agreement to this effect is expected to be signed between Moscow and Baku within the next few days. Thus, the Baku "contract of the century" to the value of $8 billion is entering a decisive phase. The first oil is to be brought to the surface next summer and will go, for all that, not to the west — to the Georgian port of Batumi — but to the north, to terminals in Novorossiysk.

Nothing is said about the use of the "western option." You get the impression that they forgot about it two months after its "expediency" was proclaimed in Washington. The dash to the north has proved preferable, despite the war in Chechnya.

Apart from anything else, the consortium of 11 oil companies, including Russia's Lukoil, has evidently received other, no less dependable guarantees that Chechnya will not pose a danger by the summer and that the oil will cross its territory "swimmingly."

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From the technical viewpoint the promises to arrange the pumping give rise to no doubts. The oil pipeline is practically intact and is capable even now of conveying up to 15 million tonnes a year. Until the year 2002 the consortium will be able to use it only to one-third of its capacity. It is hard to say what will happen next, when the big oil — up to 35 million tonnes — starts coming. It will make real sense for Russia to double the throughput of its pipelines by then and not let the Caspian oil flow in another direction.

When we say that Russia does not have a clear-cut concept in its relations with the Caucasus, this is only partly true. If we speak of Caspian oil, which is increasingly noticeably becoming a factor of world politics, many reproaches fall away. The struggle for it is emerging from the stage of backstage talks and secret deals and becoming the most intriguing problem of the region. It cannot be said that sluggish Russia is sitting here with its arms folded.

The war in Chechnya coincided, whether or not by chance, with the signing of the Baku contract. In September of last year, when the agreement setting up the AMOK international consortium was reached, the Chechen opposition undertook its first armed attacks on Dudayev. Next the Russian Army was also unable to achieve victory, when it too made haste to end the matter with "little bloodshed and a powerful strike."

Now Moscow is in a hurry to determine Chechnya's political status without waiting for the gunmen to be disarmed or for the voting results. As regional leader, Doku Zavgayev is being granted powers which no other component of the Russian Federation has. You can imagine what rights he will have if he wins the election for president of the Chechen Republic.

The Caspian petrodollars which will flow through Groznyy could prove to have far greater peacemaking potential than the Army and the intermediaries from the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe]. As a firefighting means, they are capable not only of halting the war but also of involving Dudayev's grouping in a more constructive dialogue. It should not be forgotten that the companies which make up AMOK mostly have the backing of OSCE member governments: the United States, Britain, Turkey, Norway, and others.

The bets are placed. The consortium's Western members are now no less interested than Russia in a peaceful and calm Chechnya. This is precisely an instance where the oil business and politics have found themselves tied together.

For the West, however, the linking thread of the pipeline across Chechnya and Russia resembles more a noose or fetters. The temptation to take the roundabout option is great, but it involves no less trouble. The oil pipeline to Batumi passes through Nagorno-Karabakh, across its sorest points, to which it would be necessary, in principle, to send "blue helmets" within the framework of the peacekeeping operation of which the OSCE has now been speaking for several years.

Back in the times when there was no war in Chechnya and there was no smell, as it were, of Baku oil (the AMOK concern), Russia was ready to begin the operation and Pavel Grachev had already promised to send our paratroopers to Karabakh, but the Minsk group of the OSCE advanced its own plan, under which the Russian peacekeepers would come under NATO command. The operation was thwarted, and a political solution has still not been found.

In Budapest recently the OSCE Council of Ministers approved the efforts of intermediaries for a settlement in Karabakh, pointing especially to Russia's role. But the situation has changed. Moscow is not now bursting to be a peacekeeper, reconciled to the fact that the initiative has passed to the OSCE. Its position as a detached observer suits it better. Azerbaijan, which demonstrated to the West its hostility toward Russia's imperial ambitions and did not allow Russian military bases or border guards to be stationed on its territory, now looks with unconcealed hope in the Kremlin's direction and seems to be prepared to accept Russian troops in the conflict zone. But will Russia go into Karabakh? Why should it? In order to ensure similar guarantees for the shipment of Caspian oil past its own nose? Hardly. Rather, the opposite.

Sad though this may be, instability within neighboring borders in the Caucasus is helping Russia to ensure its own interests. This applies not only to Karabakh but also to Abkhazia. Of all the three knots — Chechnya, Karabakh, and Abkhazia — the tightest one is probably the Chechen knot. But I will dare to conjecture that it will be untied sooner than the rest.

Interview With Chechnya's Aslambek Aslakhanov

MK2212092895 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Dec 95 p 3

[Interview with Aslambek Aslakhanov by Ilya Maksakov: "Republic Should Believe in Elections. Aslambek Aslakhanov Figured out Election Results in Advance." First paragraph is introduction]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The winner in Chechnya's only single-seat constituency, during the elections for

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the Russian Federation State Duma, is the republic's military commissar Ibragim Suleymanov. Also running was Aslambek Aslakhanov, head of the Association of Workers of Russian Law-Enforcement Agencies and former deputy of the Soviet Russia Supreme Soviet. Your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent met with him.

[Maksakov] How can you comment on the results of the elections in Chechnya?

[Aslakhanov] I did not doubt that Zavgayev was going to be elected head of the republic. I was only surprised at the figures — at more than 80 percent, whereas I expected between 95 and 98 percent to vote for him.

[Maksakov] Do you know your own results?

[Aslakhanov] I did not doubt I was not going to be elected. [passage omitted]

[Maksakov] They say the elections took place thanks to the participation of the Russian military....

[Aslakhanov] No. Active voters in Chechnya also included both local inhabitants and the diaspora.

[Maksakov] Dudayev's sources reported, for example, that 250,000 troops cast ballots?

[Aslakhanov] The thing is that Dudayev's sources have magnificent informants in the top power circles of the Russian Federation, and I think their statements have some ground. [passage omitted]

[Maksakov] According to Khasbulatov's forecasts, Chechnya is going to be divided into two republics: a southern and a northern. Do you think this is going to happen?

[Aslakhanov] I would not like to see such forecasts come true.

[Maksakov] Still, how possible is this?

[Aslakhanov] There is nothing impossible in this country and in our times. It can be divided for the time being, not for all times. [passage omitted]

[Maksakov] I would like to hear from you about prospects and, in particular, about the future of the so-called Dudayev's side?

[Aslakhanov] This is a very difficult question. First, I can say that those around Dudayev are different people. There are outright bandits, people no normal country in the world needs. They know well that a time when everything in the republic is going to be based on laws seals their doom. Those will go on to the bitter end, will shy at no provocation, will try to inveigle civilians into this war whatever the price, and will harass the federal troops. There are also people who do not fight in order to steal from everybody whatever comes to hand. These people fight for ideas. They want to create an independent state. If it becomes possible to explain to them that nobody lays claim to their republic, that Chechnya has received huge powers, that it is virtually independent, they will step aside, lay down their arms, and get busy doing something peaceful and constructive. There is another category of people, though, who took up arms when still in their teens. These are now hardened fighters; they know how to fight and are demonstrating it. Given an opportunity to continue to serve, say, in peacekeeping forces, they could be sent to Yugoslavia, Tajikistan, and other hot spots. They have made a splendid showing and could add glory to the Russian army through their service. Every person in the Dudayev entourage must decide for himself on the hard question of his future. Dudayev will lose support, but while blood is being spilled, he is riding high.

Consider this: They have proclaimed this slogan in Chechnya: "Criminals of all countries, unite." Interior agencies have arrested a group of 11 persons. Only two of them are Chechens. The gang includes Russians, Belarusians, and men from the Baltics, who are suspected, not without grounds, of committing terrorist acts in the republic. All is international there. Bandits now will be caught and tried, and many of them will be meted out capital punishment. A merciless war should be waged against them. They realize this and will fight to the end.

'Chechenization' of War Seen as Progress

MK2112141395 Moscow OBSHCHAYA GAZETA in Russian
No. 51, 21-27 Dec 95 (Signed to press 20 Dec 95) p 8

[Report by Andrey Fadin under the "Trend" rubric: "The War in Chechnya Is Becoming a Chechen War"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Even making provision for semiofficial distortion of information and "special wartime propaganda," many more voters turned out at Chechen polling stations than either the Zavgayev or Dudayev governments expected.

People turned out despite mortal fear of Dudayev's "terror announced in advance," despite the fully justified distrust of the purity of "elections without a choice," in the absence of conditions that are minimally required for people to express freely their will.

The formal legitimacy of the "new" government in Chechnya that was obtained through such elections is, of course, fairly token in nature. The same applies to the "old" one, though — Dudayev's elections were no fairer than Zavgayev's. But apart from the formally

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legitimate, both Chechen governments have a strong informal element to them. In the Dudayev government it is based on the tradition of "anticolonial struggle," the idea of independence, and the cult of sacrifices made for its sake. In the Zavgayev government, on the weariness of war, blood, and privations, on the desire for a normal life (promising that life will obviously be better and easier within the Russian Federation).

Both these ideas are inextricably linked in people's minds and lives. Clearly, Chechen society as a whole cannot turn one way or the other overnight. A geosocial division of Chechnya is under way which partly coincides with its traditional division between mountains and plains.

Doku Zavgayev has become the leader of Chechnya's flatlands, there is no longer any doubt about it. But he can consolidate his leadership only by seizing from Dudayev a part of his mythology, taking over his slogans and promises, and offering the Chechens something more acceptable than the prospect of continuing a hopeless, albeit heroic, war.

Zavgayev appears to have managed to do so by signing a provisional agreement on the fundamental principles of relations between the Russian Federation and the Chechen Republic with Chernomyrdin on 8 December.

This is an astonishing document. Under it the Chechen Republic will gain (until a treaty on the delimitation of authority is signed with Moscow) "special status within the Russian Federation." The "special status" calls for lots of extra rights and privileges. In particular, "matters of owning, using, and disposing of natural resources (!), and also state enterprises, other movable and immovable state assets located on the territory of the Chechen Republic, except for federally-owned property" will be placed under the jurisdiction of the Chechen Republic's government authorities. The Chechen authorities will also "establish international and foreign economic ties, participate in the operation of corresponding international organizations," "define the characteristic features in the organization of education, taking account of the ethnic and historical traditions of the peoples living on the territory of the Chechen Republic." "For the purpose of fostering cultural, trade, and economic links the Chechen Republic may have missions in other states (!)"

Under the agreement, Moscow undertakes obligations with regard to Chechnya's restoration, the funding of "the programs of medical and social rehabilitation of war victims, the return and absorption of refugees, and also special programs for the development of the Chechen Republic itself."

The agreement also establishes "a special procedure for alternative civil service on the territory of the Chechen Republic and a special procedure for military service, including in military construction units to be set up for the purpose of restoring the economic and social sectors of the republic."

For those who dismiss this as just empty talk, Soviet-style, there is something more tangible to it. Moscow pledges "to create the requisite conditions so as to ensure regular international flights from Groznyy (!)"

Those who have an idea about the actual importance of the shuttle air trade through Groznyy for the economy of the North Caucasus and Chechnya itself can easily understand that for tens of thousands of families that are most active socially and, hence, most important politically, this provision of the agreement may perhaps outweigh any phrases about independence. Actually, it is precisely this practice of a "free trade zone" that has largely maintained social peace within Dudayev's protostate, the foundation of which was made up of a fairly numerous group of "new Chechens."

Clearly, "everything is smooth only on paper," and it is a long way from the signing to implementation, but nonetheless this looks more realistic and acceptable than the "war to the victorious end" promised by Dzhokhar Dudayev. Zavgayev and the part of the Moscow establishment standing behind him has offered the Chechens a peace that is not that bad. What they offer is a promise for the future.

Meanwhile, even Dzhokhar Dudayev would not reject most of the agreement's provisions. This said, there is a purely symbolic step from this to what was frankly the rhetorical sovereignty he proclaimed. And if he had been offered such an agreement, let's say, before 1994, it could have become the foundation for one "rotten compromise" or another.

Moscow, however, became ready to take such a step only after a bloody and devastating war, after the first pro-Moscow government of Khadzhiyev effectively became a disaster, and after the outlines of a military-political impasse clearly emerged. In this regard it is none other than Dzhokhar Musayevich Dudayev who is the forerunner and coauthor of the agreement that has become the personal victory of Zavgayev, the person he ousted. Such is, alas, the cruel irony of history: One is destined to plow — another, to reap.

Moscow invested a pretty penny in the Chechen elections. Costly cover operations, yet more infusions of funds and materials, expenditures of 30 trillion rubles announced in the 1996 draft budget (whereas the entire state debt to the Pension Fund is just 17 trillion),

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an agreement that has become a tempting precedent for other Russian republics... The bets that have been placed on the effort to legitimize the Zavgayev government are evidently too high. Yet, Moscow currently has no cheaper solution.

Continuing to keep the army in Chechnya would not only be costly, but simply dangerous. The war must be stopped — preferably before the presidential elections in Russia. The most likely way to achieve this is to create at least a minimally legitimate and viable regime in lowland Chechnya, to pump in money and weapons, to transform the Russian-Chechen conflict into an intra-Chechen one (which it once was before Moscow's intervention), and gradually to "Chechenize" the war. And only afterward can the army be withdrawn.

After this turn of the steering wheel, the war will be for the most part waged by two different Chechen states — those of Dudayev and Zavgayev. Moreover, they can even be close in terms of social organization ("bosses" controlling the key resources and sources of financing will delegate some of their formal legitimacy to "strongmen" on the ground, such as Gantemirov and Labazanov on one side and Basayev and Geliskhanov, on the other, and so forth).

Evidently, pro-Russian Chechnya will have an absolute superiority regarding any types of resources. For all the high morale, immense military experience, and strong ideology of Dudayev's men, the victory of "this" Chechnya over "that" one is just a matter of time, even if it takes years. But once the army is withdrawn and a new intra-Chechen border is drawn, Russia will be in a position to wait as long as it pleases.

This scenario can be significantly — albeit not fatally — distorted by the across-the-board "Afghanistanization" of the Chechen situation — where vertical ties, subordination, and the hierarchy of leaders in both camps will be disrupted. This process is proceeding faster on the Dudayev side owing to breaks in communications between the headquarters and field commanders (an eyewitness recounted that an entry permit signed by Shirvani Basayev failed to impress a local commander in Vedeno Rayon, which is altogether bad). But on the other side, too, Zavgayev is in many respects no authority for Gantemirov.

This, alas, cheerless scenario is nevertheless the most reasonable one among the options currently under discussion. All the more so because Boris Yeltsin in person — not abstract Russia or even the impersonalized "Moscow establishment" — is interested in it.

Yet one should not forget, of course, that Russia is a country of miracles, where, as Peter the Great ordered minted on a well-known medal, the impossible comes true.

Gudermes Seen as Attempt to 'Torpedo' Elections

LD2112133995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1324 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Oleg Velichko and Artyom Protasenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, December 21 — Russian Minister for Nationalities and Regional Policy Vyacheslav Mikhailov today characterised the Gudermes events as an attempt of Dudayev's gunmen to repeat the Budennovsk tragedy and to torpedo the elections in the Chechen Republic. Interviewed by Itar-Tass after a meeting of the Russian Government here, he accused Dudayev's men of "turning people into gun fodder in order to resolve political problems." According to the minister, the Gudermes events "stem logically from Dzhokhar Dudayev's latest statements."

In spite of this, Mikhailov hopes that talks on the package of military problems would be resumed within the Special Observers Commission. "It is not the fault of the federal forces that these contacts were broken off. The promises of Dudayev's side, including the promises of Aslan Maskhadov to release two Russian officers, have still not been fulfilled," the minister added.

A Russo-Chechen commission will shortly begin work on the principal provisions of a future powers-sharing treaty, Mikhailov stated. "Its core," he noted, "will consist of participants of the current negotiations, including delegates from Dudayev's side. All the forces interested in stopping the bloodshed and in creating normal condtions for the republic's life must be represented on this commission."

Amnesty Commission Begins Work in Groznyy

LD2112135695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1218 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Gorbunov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, December 21 — The commission on amnesty began working in Groznyy today. It was formed in accordance with Russian President Boris Yeltsin's decree "On legal guarantees to participants in illegal armed formations in the Chechen republic who voluntarily stopped combat actions". Vladimir Zorin, first deputy head of the territorial agency of federal executive authorities in Chechnya, said this by telephone to Itar-Tass.

Under the decree, the Chechen government has a right to decide matters of amnesty of participants in

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the conflict. The special commission formed by the Chechen government is to consider applications of people who voluntarily surrendered arms and stopped unlawful actions that criminal proceedings should not be instituted against them. This decisions will be taken by the commission jointly with law enforcement bodies of the Chechen republic.

The presidential decree does not apply to persons who committeed grievous crimes and against whom criminal proceedings have been instituted.

Zorin said the situation in Grozny was normal. "The city is functioning, market places are open, life proceeds normally," he reported. At the same time he noted that the situation in Gudermes remains complicated. Negotiations between representatives of the head of the Chechen republic and of illegal armed units continue in Urus-Martan. A number of militants have already left the village, Zorin said. He said that reports of some media that there is firing in Urus-Martan and that federal troops are advancing to it are not true.

Reportage on Conflict Situation in Gudermes

Operation To Lift Siege Postponed

LD2112145595 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1355 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Mikhail Shevtsov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 21 Dec — In order to avoid large loss of life among the civilian population, active combat operations were not conducted today to lift the siege of the railway district of Gudermes, Stanislav Kavun, deputy commander of the interior troops of the Interior Ministry of the Russian Federation, told the ITAR-TASS correspondent.

According to his information, federal forces retreated to take up positions on the perimeter of the town after the liberation of the military commandant's office on 20 December. According to operational data, there may be more than 600 fighters in Gudermes. Helicopters of the federal forces have only been used to deliver strikes against concentrations of fighters identified by intelligence.

According to Kavun, the operation to lift the siege of the railway station has been postponed for now and the command of the joint group of forces in Chechnya is taking every measure to avoid unjustified civilian loss of life. Corridors for the civilian population to leave the city have been opened.

Kavun said that 27 servicemen of the interior troops had been killed during recent events in Gudermes.

Russian Troops Blockaded in Station

LD2112214995 Moscow NTV in Russian 1900 GMT 21 Dec 95

[From the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer Mikhail Osokin] According to the latest information from Chechnya, Dudayev's attachments attempted to break out of Gudermes this evening, but were beaten back. The Dudayev supporters tried to take checkpoints on the highway northeast of the town and fired on the checkpoints with mortars and grenade throwers. The troops are gradually tightening the ring around Gudermes. They are carrying out artillery attacks on the Dudayev supporters' fortified positions. Our special correspondents are at the troops' forward positions.

[Correspondent Aleksandr Abramenko] The situation in Gudermes has not changed significantly today. As before, the town is blockaded on all sides by federal troops, who do not try to enter it, but shell the fighters' from their weapon emplacements.

Our film crew managed to get to one of the emplacements today whose personnel control the southern approach to Gudermes. The fighters [boytsy] came here, who in yesterday's successful operation were brought out of the military commandant's office after defending it for several days.

Is it clear who is in the commandant's office and the station?

[Soldier] There is no one in the commandant's office. We have broken out of the commandant's office, but I do not know about the station.

[Abramenko] How many Russian soldiers died in all?

[Soldier] Died? [words indistinct] were wounded.

[Abramenko] These officers and soldiers say no one knows at present the real picture of what is happening in the town, perhaps with the exception of the military command who are very unwilling to share information with journalists. At the same time as unofficial statistics talk about allegedly insignificant losses for the federal forces, these boys say that no fewer than 100 people died and approximately 200 were wounded in the military action as a whole in Gudermes. Only yesterday helicopter crews evacuated no fewer than 50 wounded fighters [boytsy].

No one can say exactly what the losses are in the station building which more than 100 special-purpose troops [OMON] continue to defend. There has been practically no communication with them over the past 24 hours. It is assumed that they came to an end of supplies and

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ammunition a long time ago. It has not been possible to lift the blockade on them as the fighters [boyeviki] are putting up fierce resistance and not allowing troops into the town.

Are they getting any further supplies of ammunition?

[Federal officer] They are not only getting further supplies, but they even have communications technology which we do not. Even if we transmit anything they know everything straightaway.

[Abramenko] Are there many fighters [boyeviki] there?

[Federal officer] At least 600, that is a minimum.

[Abramenko] The military say it is possible to reverse the situation today either with the active support of aircraft and artillery or at the price of very high losses among soldiers of the federal forces. No one knows for sure which variant the command will decide to use in the immediate future.

Mayor Says Over 100 Civilians Killed

LD2112151195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1442 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Dec 21 (Interfax) — The fighting in Gudermes has claimed the lives of more than one hundred civilians, Mayor of Gudermes Ramzan Vashayev said on Thursday.

He said that about 30,000 civilians still remained in the city.

Mayor Vashayev said that corpses were lying on the streets in the city center and it was impossible to remove them for proper burial because of heavy fire. He said that militants remaining in the city were looting shops and homes.

Mayor Vashayev said that in some instances federal troops had thrown grenades into the basements of homes where civilians had taken shelter.

Vashayev said that the residents of the older part of Gudermes had not let militants in, however separatists controlled a great part of new residential areas.

Economic Issues

Lukoil Bows Out of Iranian Shelf Development Projects

MK2212055295 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 21 Dec 95 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Lukoil Will Not Take Part in Tender To Develop Iranian Shelf"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian oil company Lukoil will not take part in projects for the development of the Iranian part of the Persian Gulf shelf on terms proposed by Tehran, said a high-ranking company representative. According to him, the Lukoil leadership considers the 11 projects offered by Iran for the tender, including the development of shelf deposits in the Persian Gulf and the modernization of oil refineries, as "economically unprofitable."

Minister Cited on Restructuring of Coal Industry

MM2212115695 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 22 Dec 95 Weekend Edition p 4

[Report by Vladimir Ivanov: "Shortages in the Midst of Plenty"]

[FBIS Translated Text] What is at first glance a paradoxical situation has taken shape at Russian coal mines. Their territory is bursting with mountains of coal that cannot be sold: Enterprises are not taking it. Yet those same enterprises are coming to a standstill because of fuel shortages.

There is no paradox here, Russian Federation Fuel and Energy Minister Yuriy Shafranik says. The coal sector, like all the rest, was structured on the centralized principle. Powerful centralized coal regions were created. Like the Kuzbass or the Kansk-Achinsk Energy Complex. Coal was transported all over the country from them by rail. But now that transportation costs three or four times more than mining, the price of coal has also soared. So we are having to seek the optimum way out of the crisis. There is only one solution — restructuring the sector.

One of the basic principles of the restructuring is that coal is a regional type of fuel. In other words, it should not be transported great distances to regions where there are coal deposits; instead, mining should be developed on the spot, minimizing transportation. An example of this is Maritime Kray — minimal use of its deposits was made for decades. But during this heating season an additional 2 million tonnes of coal will be mined in Maritime Kray. This has made it possible both to curb prices and to preserve jobs. It is the same story in Rostov, where two new mines have been established. Similar programs have been elaborated for every region, and some of them have already been passed by the government commission.

Of course, this certainly does not mean that the price of coal is not going up. But the minister offers a firm assurance that coal industry workers are not inflating the price for no reason. Each increase is forced upon them. The general normative mechanisms and the sharp reduction in subsidies from the state budget make it necessary to take unpopular steps. Of course, consumers do

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not like this. But it is unrealistic to halve subsidies from the state budget without at the same time increasing the price of output. So the price factor is painful not only for consumers but also for coal industry workers themselves.

However, the regional principle in no way means the curtailment of work in traditional coal basins. Only the transport destinations are changing, but Russia cannot manage without the development of effective new deposits. For instance, the opening up of the Yerunakovskoye deposit in the Kuzbass has made it possible to start the construction of open-cut pits, coal mines, and the country's biggest railroad station. And the construction of housing and highways that is going on there will create a lot of jobs.

But Sakhalin is a particularly graphic illustration of the new policy, the minister says. Four years ago coal mining there had to be stopped altogether and everything had to be switched to gas. Now we are again intending to mine local coal, and not only for ourselves but also for export. By the fall of next year we are hoping to increase exports to a much higher level than planned in the old programs regarding Sakhalin.

Of course, the restructuring of the sector involves the closure of old, unprofitable mines. This is a harsh condition of the market. But this process means that people lose their jobs and are left without a livelihood, especially as many settlements grew up around mines and to serve mines and they are the only production facilities there. In the last two years the sector has lost 140,000 jobs. So approximately the same number of families are under threat.

It is a very painful problem, Yuriy Shafranik says. But we are solving it. Above all, before closing a mine we think about the people. We find jobs for them in other areas, at neighboring mines, pits, and other production facilities. Some places have surplus manpower, so we are currently elaborating a program for the job placement of people employed in coal mining. It is planned to resolve this extremely complex issue before the year 2000.

Unfortunately, this is far from the only painful problem in the sector. The situation where mountains of unsold coal are piling up at mines while prices are increasing is making people opt for instant, short-term solutions. For instance, cutting the Russian coal industry and importing cheap coal from abroad.

Given a shortsighted policy, Shafranik says, such things are possible. For instance, Ukraine is importing coal from Poland although this year we have doubled coal exports to Ukraine. And unless we abolish double taxation, we will lose our market. But if we do abolish it, deliveries to Ukraine could be increased 25-30 percent even next year. This is to Ukraine's advantage and our own.

State 'Indifference' Hurts Urals Gold Sector

MM2212111795 Moscow TRUD in Russian 19 Dec 95 p 3

[Report by Anatoliy Dzhapakov: "Gold Fever. Sector Engaged in Extracting Precious Metals Is Reeling Because of State's Inattention to It"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yekaterinburg — History and legend have preserved a multitude of diverse reports about the fantastic riches of Urals gold industry workers, about the luxury in which they lived, and about senseless extravagance. It is said that A. Ryazanov and T. Zotov, the Urals' best-known gold mine owners, gave their horses champagne to drink and, having decided to become related, celebrated their children's wedding...for almost a whole year.

Ordinary gold prospectors and simple Russian peasants did not go short either. The selfsame Tit Zotov came from peasant stock and in 10 years of gold mining he amassed one of Russia's biggest capital fortunes. Of course, there were only a handful of such people, but they did exist....

In my tours of gold mines I did not, of course, expect to encounter anything resembling bygone exotica. But I admit that neither did I expect what I did see.

I asked workers, specialists, and leaders the simplest questions. When did you last go anywhere on vacation? Have you bought anything outstanding in recent years? What is the housing situation? In reply I heard: What purchases or trips? We cannot afford them on our wages, and even they are sometimes delayed. Working conditions have sharply deteriorated, equipment has completely worn out (there are drags which are 60 years old), industrial injuries are increasing.... It would be understandable had I heard this at some "dormant" enterprise, of which there are now a multitude. But gold extraction is another matter altogether. It has no problem selling its products, the traditional, stable consumer — the state treasury — has been retained. In addition, it was recently decided to sell some extracted precious metals to banks which have special licenses. There are also rich prospects for development. The fairly recently opened "Vorontsovskoye" deposit is almost ready to begin production. The Central Urals mines 3,500 kg of gold a year and the new deposit will make it possible to add another 4,000 kg to this.

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It is valuable not only for this reason. Throughout the world gold is extracted mainly as an ore and only 30-35 percent is mined as placer gold. This is because a mine is an enterprise operating all year round, it provides normal living conditions for its workers and a well-developed settlement. Whereas the pursuit of placer metal takes place seasonally and often in the remotest places.

In Russia mainly placer gold is mined, although specialists say that 80 or more percent of Russian gold is accounted for by ore reserves which are as yet untouched. Thus, the "Voronstsovskoye" deposit is an ore deposit which can be worked in an entirely civilized fashion.

Another promising deposit — the "Gagarskoye" deposit, which is also an ore deposit — is also being prepared for operation. In terms of the mining method it is unique in Russia. Here the metal can be derived by leaching: A special mixture is pumped underground and then, saturated with gold, is pumped out.

In short, everything needed to make the Urals gold-mining sector flourish seems to be present. One thing is lacking — state concern. Which is more than strange. Can it really be possible that **the state does not need gold?**

You will recall that our old rubles carried the following inscription, which inspired confidence in their value: "Bank notes are backed by gold, precious metals, and other state bank assets." This inscription is no longer there. Is it not because **there is nothing** in particular with which to back them? Urals Gold and Platinum Company specialists told me that our gold reserves now total around 300 tonnes whereas the total used to be around 2,000 tonnes! Yet gold is "not needed"?

Such indifference toward the mineral wealth of the great "gold-possessing" power which Russia is (but it has absolutely no desire to extract it) is simply depressing. This indifference manifests itself in everything.

Take the "Vorontsovskoye" deposit again. It will require huge investment to develop it, and foreign investment will be essential. Talks on setting up a joint venture are being held with a number of Western firms. Investors are attracted by the wealth of the deposit and its location in the center of the country near the fairly large Urals city of Krasnoturinsk. But throughout the world gold miners have **tax breaks.** Experts say that in the United States no more than 38 percent per gram [g] of mined gold goes on taxes. The figure is 62.5 percent in our country. That is, if you have mined 100 g you have to hand over 62.5 g. You have to use the rest for development, to buy equipment, for construction, to pay wages, and so on.

This situation complicates any talks on investment. "In 1994," A. Bacherikov, director of the Urals Gold and Platinum Company, said, "$40 billion in foreign capital investment was attracted into Chinese gold mining. Only $4 billion was attracted into Russian gold mining."

Many of our government's decisions are hitting the gold miner. And hard! Including the economic innovation of recent months — the "currency band." Previously the state purchased the precious metal at differentiated prices depending on the cost of producing it. This did not provide a stimulus to mine it more cheaply. Now there is a single price which is pegged to the London exchange and converted into rubles. But the artificially pegged dollar is not going up, while ruble prices for power sources and other things are going up. Maybe this is good for somebody, but it could not be worse for the gold miner. Because in reality gold is becoming more expensive; currently the real price per gram is 75,000-80,000 rubles [R], which comes out at around R55,000 when converted from the tightly pegged dollar.

It is the same in everything — from small to large. At first gold miners were all at sea following the collapse of the sector's administrative structure. With every reason. Because they had gotten used to receiving everything in a guaranteed, centralized fashion and then suddenly everybody became a legal person in themselves. They should have learned to manage autonomously.

Now gold miners have flocked to the "Dragotsennosti Urala" financial and industrial group, which combines, apart from mining, the processing and sale of products and which comprises financial institutions, a bank, and an investment company. Now the gold miners are already thinking of setting up their own association which will enable them to solve specific problems. It is easier to organize supply, for example, by joint efforts. If only because it is cheaper to purchase everything wholesale (to organize the surveying of new deposits, set up various consultancy services, etc.).

But even this is unlikely to lead to prosperity unless the state eventually abandons its completely indifferent attitude toward its own gold wealth. Incidentally, what is the reason for this indifference? Maybe gold has lost its special role as a universal value equivalent and monetary commodity? No, specialists say, nothing of the sort has yet happened in the world. Maybe our Russian habit of rashly overdoing it in all cases is simply having an effect: If the market element already exists, could the state turn its back on any production, including such a specific kind as gold mining?

Be that as it may, the market result is so far negative. The sense of having a market lies in the scope for initiative and in getting rid of petty patronage. But the

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scope for "initiative" in business operations is limited to two options for gold miners: state deliveries and selling the metal to banks.

The first is unprofitable — not just because of the "currency band." The state does not pay on time and strives to hand out money only when it has been devalued by inflation. At the moment the second is only theoretically possible. Banks are not accepting gold because there is not yet a package of normative and legal acts making it possible to make profit on precious metals, although there are plenty of prohibitions in this sphere.

I have diligently tried to find just one prosperous extraction enterprise in the Urals which is making a good profit, which is rapidly developing, and whose workers have a high living standard. There aren't any. Capital is not being acquired in this sector. You do not hear of any modern-day Zotov's or Ryazanov's. On the other hand there are hordes of the kind of prospectors who back in the old days coined the phrase "We pan for gold, we wail together."

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International Affairs

Kuchma, Yeltsin Agree: Defense Ministers To Meet Perry

WS2212100595 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0046 GMT 22 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Dec. 20 — Presidents Boris Yeltsin and Leonid Kuchma agreed in a telephone conversation that the Russian and Ukrainian Defense Ministers will meet with U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry on Jan. 5 at the Pervomaysk nuclear command.

The U.S. had offered to mediate defense-related questions between Ukraine and Russia such as the division of the Black Sea Fleet and transfer of Ukrainian missiles to Russia, but Russia had initially balked at the proposal.

Kuchma and Yeltsin also discussed recent developments in bilateral relations and expressed satisfaction with certain improvements in the past few months.

It was stressed during the conversation, Kuchma's press service said, that this improvement was facilitated by a series of meetings of the two countries' ministerial leaders held in accordance with an agreement between the presidents.

However, there is still no end in sight to the four-year old deadlock on a Russian-Ukrainian cooperation treaty, nor has the long-awaited visit of Yeltsin to Kiev been scheduled.

Kiev Ready To Establish Diplomatic Relations With Bosnia

LD2112190695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1623 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, Dec 21 (Interfax - Ukraine) — The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry notified the Bosnian government of Ukraine's readiness to establish normal diplomatic relations with this republic, the director of the ministry's information department, Yuriy Sergeyev, told Interfax - Ukraine Thursday [21 December].

Sergeyev said the note proposed the diplomatic relations be regarded as established since the day of its sending.

Until recently, Ukraine maintained diplomatic relations with all former Yugoslav republics, except for Bosnia.

Ex-President Kravchuk: Russia Cannot Abolish CIS Treaty

LD2112184695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1623 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, Dec 21 (Interfax - Ukraine) — A unilateral denunciation of the agreement to abolish the former Soviet Union and create the CIS would be invalid, ex-president of Ukraine, now people's deputy Leonid Kravchuk told Interfax-Ukraine Thursday.

The leader of the Communist Party of Russia (KPRF), Gennadiy Zyuganov, had stated his faction in the State Duma would propose denunciation of the agreement.

This issue belongs to international relations rather than the Duma, Kravchuk said.

In addition, "reasonable forces will prevent consideration of this issue in the Russian parliament," he added.

The presidents of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, Boris Yeltsin, Stanislav Shushkevich and Leonid Kravchuk had signed an agreement to create the CIS in December 1991, which abolished the former Soviet Union.

Prior to this, the Civil Congress of Ukraine had initiated a nationwide canvassing campaign to hold a referendum on denunciation of the agreement. A number of left parties of Ukraine, including pro-Russian ones, also state the need for restoration of the former Soviet Union.

Kiev Accuses BSF Command of 'Provocative' Conduct

LD2112172295 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1320 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The Ukrainian Ministry of Defense press service has denied a recent report by the Black Sea Fleet [BSF] press center on the capture of a BSF food depot by "a group of Ukrainian sailors." The incident was caused by the reluctance on the part of some BSF officers to recognize the legitimacy of the scheduled transfer of fleet facilities to the Ukrainian Navy, the ministry said.

The Ukrainian Defense Ministry accused BSF officials of using the misunderstanding as a bargaining point in political disputes. The ministry quoted Acting BSF Commander Petr Svyatashov who blamed the incident on the "joint deployment of two fleets in the same territory" and even "poor control at Ukrainian navy units." Such reaction on the part of the BSF command appears to be deliberately provocative, the Defense Ministry said. It is particularly unacceptable today, as BSF facilities are finally being transferred to the

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Ukrainian Navy in line with the Sochi accords between the Ukrainian and Russian defenSe ministers, it added.

Chernobyl Closure Memorandum Signed in Ottawa

LD2112161995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1517 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By Nikolay Setunskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] OTTAWA, December 21 (Itar-Tass) — A Memorandum on the closing down of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant was signed here on Wednesday between Ukraine and the "seven nation group".

"This document fixes for the first time the deadlines for the closing of the Chernobyl power plant with the financial and technological assistance of the seven states," Itar-Tass was told by Yuriy Kostenko, Ukrainian Minister for the Protection of the Environment and Nuclear Security, who signed the document for his country. "The memorandum stipulates, in particular, that the programme for decommissioning the Chernobyl plant and turning it into an ecologically clean facility must be financed by western subsidies," he added.

"At present," he went on, "the seven nations are ready to give Ukraine aid amounting to 500 million U.S. dollars. The final sum of the subsidies, which is to be much bigger, will be determined along with the elaboration of exact technical projects for stopping the reactors and for their entombment. We have no such projects at present."

The minister stressed that the memorandum, which was signed on behalf of the "seven nation group" by Sheila Coops, Canadian Deputy Premier and Minister for the Protection of the Environment, was not legally bounding and was "only the first step towards the establishment of effective cooperation". "It must be followed up by the drafting of concrete agreements, which will determine the mechanisms by means of which Ukraine will get the promised aid, by concrete financial commitments on the part of the sides involved, and they all will be legally binding documents," Kostenko noted.

"Naturally," he stated, "the Ukrainian government reserves the right to decide this question in another way, proceeding from the economic situation in our country, if all this remains a scrap of paper and will not be financed, and if no long-term mechanism is created for this purpose. I cannot say for sure that the power plant will be definitely stopped in the year 2000 due to the signed memorandum."

The minister stressed that the implementation of the programme to close down the Chernobyl nuclear power plant was unthinkable without the active participation of Russia and its scientists and designers. He noted that their "participation is a sort of guarantee that the programme will be successfully implemented".

Nuclear Energy Agreement With Canada

LD2112211395 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1753 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Setunskiy]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ottawa, 21 Dec — Ukraine and Canada have signed an agreement here on cooperation in nuclear energy. This will open the way to bilateral trade of nuclear material and equipment for peaceful means in order to meet Ukraine's growing energy demands, said Canadian Foreign Minister Andre Ouellet on 21 December when the agreement was signed.

In Ukraine, the issues discussed were "prospects for future development in the nuclear sector and the viability of switching to another type of reactor, in particular they talked about the possible use of Canadian reactors," environment and nuclear safety minister Yuriy Kostenko told ITAR-TASS in an interview today.

The minister did not rule out the possibility of Ukraine buying the reactors "which would be economically and ecologically beneficial." However, he did say that regarding any definite plans for this "it is still early to speculate because Ukraine does not yet have a new program on development of nuclear energy."

National Affairs

Russians Reportedly Disrupt Training of Tatar Unit

WS2212112695 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0046 GMT 22 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Simferopol, Dec. 20 — Training of a Ukrainian-Tatar paramilitary unit in the Crimean Tatar stronghold of Bakhchysaray was disrupted by Russian "provocateurs," the radical State Independence of Ukraine (SIU) organization announced.

The joint unit allegedly attracted the attention of Russian security forces that SIU claimed operate freely in Crimea.

Russians were accused of throwing empty vodka bottles at Crimean Tatar houses and threatening and swearing at Tatars in Russian.

The training camp of the unit is located in a district that is home to many of Crimea's 240,000 repatriated Tatars. When Tatars gathered to confront the Russians, the latter fled the scene, said the SIU report.

SIU said the Tatars "hospitably received the Ukrainians who arrived for training in the sub-unit."

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On December 18, the training was visited by Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev Mustafa Dzhemilev, who conducted a press conference. The unit's training finished the next day.

More Finance Urged for Military Conversion Program

LD2112223395 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1900 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev [no date as received] — Valeriy Malov, the minister of machine-building, military-industrial complex and conversion of Ukraine, told the parliament session on 21 December that he was in favor of increased financing of scientific and technical programs connected with conversion. The 1996 draft state budget provides for the allocation of 13 trillion karbovantsy to implement the programs.

The minister believes that conversion should become a state priority in 1996. According to a UNIAN correspondent, Malov believes that products of Ukraine's military-industrial complex "have high enough export potentials, and this refers not only to armaments but also to other products manufactured at enterprises of the military-industrial complex."

Malov said the export of shipbuilding industry products was expected to double and the number of buyers of aircraft industry products to increase in 1996. The government's task for 1996 is "to turn space and missile enterprises into a closed-cycle industry," the minister believes.

The program for the economic and social development of Ukraine envisages structural reorganization of the industry, respecialization of the military-industrial complex enterprises, and expanded production of export and import-substituting products.

Plan To Transport Oil to Europe Across Belarus, Baltics

LD2112210695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1916 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, Dec 21 (Interfax - Ukraine) — Ukraine's State Committee for oil, gas and oil-refining industry has outlined an inter-branch scientific-technical program "Pipeline Transport of Ukraine". It is currently at the stage of examination, Yevhen Dovzhok, Chairman of the Committee, told the Ukrainian Parliament Thursday.

The program provides for wholesale flaw-detection inspection of pipelines, their reconstruction, replacement of a considerable part of gas-pumping equipment and pumping stations in the course of the next decade, he said.

The export carrying capacity of the pipelines is to be increased to reach 140000-150000 million cubic meters of gas a year. With the commissioning of the Odessa oil trans-shipment complex, whose construction is nearing completion, as well as the Odessa-Brody linking oil pipeline, a new direction is to be created for the transportation of oil to Europe, Belarus and the Baltic countries.

A considerable part of the funds required for the implementation of the project is to be derived from the haulage of oil and gas, as well as through the drawing of foreign investments, Y. Dovzhok said.

The total length of the trunk-line and distributing oil pipelines of the "Ukrgazprom" joint stock company is over 35000 kilometers. The estimated output of the gas pipeline system by incoming gas pipelines along the border of Ukraine is nearly 332000 million cubic meters of gas a year. A system of pipelines runs across East Ukraine to enable the transportation up to 30-35 thousand million cubic meters a year to South Russia.

Thus, Y. Dovzhok concluded, Ukraine is the world's biggest transit carrier of natural gas. Yet, more than 35 per cent of gas pipelines have been in operation for more than 20 years now.

It is necessary to repair annually almost 250-300 kilometers of trunk-line gas pipelines. Up to 30 percent of compressor stations are to be replaced.

On top of that, around 4000 km of trunk-line pipelines run across Ukraine's territory. They carry Russian oil for export to Europe through the system of the "Druzhba" oil pipeline to the Odessa terminal and across Ukraine's territory to South Russia, towards Tikhoretsk and Novorossiisk, as well as to oil refineries in Russia.

In 1996, it is planned to invest more than 337 million USD into the gas transportation system.

Kiev Denies Any Political Overtones in Latest Shakeup

LD2112204995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1804 GMT 21 Dec 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Kuchma's spokesman Dmitriy Markov at a news conference in Kiev has denied any political implications behind the latest reshuffle within the administration and describing them as being routine.

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He quoted the president as saying government changes could take place depending on the tasks in hand. IF Note: The president appointed Vladimir Kuznetsov as his new senior aide on Tuesday after the dismissal of Oleksandr Razumkov who tendered his resignation four days before.

Presidential advisors for macroeconomic matters and internal policy Anatoliy Halchinskiy and Dmitriy Vydrin also offered to resign.

Earlier the president sacked two other aides — Vadim Grechaninov (defense matters) and Yuriy Gavrilov (security). [passage omitted]

Special Service Set Up Within Army To Monitor UFOs

WS2112150195 Kiev KYYIVSKA PRAVDA in Ukrainian 19 Dec 95 p 1

[Unattributed report in the "Ukraine and the World" column: "The Defense Ministry Monitors UFOs"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an exclusive interview with the Kiyevskiye Vedomosti radio station, Colonel Yuriy Lunyov, chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces Main Directorate of the Meteorological Service, said that a special service for monitoring unidentified flying objects has been set up within his directorate. The service records unidentified flying objects according to their form, color, sound, and... behavior. During the past two years, as Yuriy Lunyov reported, his subordinates have recorded two cases of UFOs visiting Ukraine. On one occasion, even a fighter plane had to take off for this reason. Still, they have never managed to collect materials confirming such visits. Additionally, Col. Lunyov said that according to an expert in unidentified flying objects, Russian antiaircraft forces downed a UFO in the North Caucasus last year and even took an alien "captive".

Economic Issues

Industry Minister Gives Production Figures

LD2112172795 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1320 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — In accordance with the state program for economic and social development, it is planned to maintain industrial production in 1996 at the 1995 level with a slight increase in some sectors, said Ukrainian Industry Minister Valeriy Mazur at the parliament session today.

According to a UNIAN correspondent, Mazur said that in accordance with the program it is planned to produce goods worth 3 trillion karbovantsi more in current prices, in particular, 54.5 million tonnes of iron ore, 20.5 million tonnes of cast iron, and 650,000 tonnes of metal products.

Approximately the same indicators were expected in 1995, but the production volumes were somewhat lower. Thus, in 11 months of 1995 production volumes compared with 1994 were: 92 percent in metallurgy, 91 percent in the chemical industry, and approximately 70 percent in the light and timber processing industries.

According to Mazur, the decline in industrial production over the last three years was 15-30 percent, while it was only 10 percent this year.

The minister said that exports of industrial products increased by 16 percent compared with 1994, and that over 11 months of this year $2.8 billion worth of products were dispatched; more than 80 percent of the exports were made up of metallurgical products.

Mazur stressed that the main aim of industrial production, in accordance with the program, was to stabilize it, improve the quality of products, save energy, and increase the output of competitive products.

Budget for 1995 To Be Implemented by 87 Percent

LD2112222495 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1900 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The 1995 consolidated budget will be implemented by 87 percent of the level approved by the Supreme Council of Ukraine in April 1995 and will stand at 2.321300 quadrillion karbovantsi, Ukraine's Finance Minister Petro Hermanchuk told the parliament session on 21 December. He said the budget revenue was expected in the region of 1.989700 quadrillion karbovantsi, i.e. 85.7 percent of its estimated level.

In 1995, the National Bank of Ukraine issued credits to the value of 244 trillion karbovantsi and government bonds to the value of 25 trillion karbovantsi.

'Air Ukraine' To Be Divided Into Holding Companies

WS2212095795 Lvov INFOBANK in English 0903 GMT 22 Dec 95

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev — In an interview with INFOBANK the head of Ukraine's State Department of Aviation, Mykola Marchenko, said that his department's development plan for Ukraine's air transportation system through the year 2000 calls for the deconsolidation of the state-owned airline Air Ukraine into four holding companies. According to Mr. Marchenko, the first holding company's main enterprise will be the Boryspil

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aviation enterprise. It will also include the company Ukraine International Airlines and the Lvov, Donetsk, and Odessa regional aviation enterprises and will handle international passenger and cargo flights.

The second holding company will deal with flights within Ukraine and to countries of the CIS. The other two holding companies will be involved in airport services and will provide air transport services for domestic economic needs.

Mr. Marchenko pointed out that a recent financial audit of Air Ukraine uncovered serious violations. Specifically, the company's central office had accumulated large sums of money in bank accounts while it had not settled accounts with other aviation enterprises which are included in Air Ukraine. For instance, Air Ukraine's central office owes the Boryspil aviation enterprise's a total of KBV [karbovantsi] 52 billion plus more than $2.6 million. At the same time KBV 20 billion which was to have been used to settle accounts with regional aviation enterprises was deposited into Air Ukraine bank accounts. Another $600,000 from a total of $1 million which the Cabinet of Ministers had allocated to Air Ukraine for its development was also deposited into such accounts. Mr. Marchenko said that he has had to temporarily relieve the head of Air Ukraine, Vyacheslav Ilyin, from his duties since the latter interfered with the work of the committee which carried out the audit.

Plans Revealed To Advance Cooperation With IMF

LD2112203595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1814 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, Dec 21 (Interfax - Ukraine) — Ukraine hopes to advance cooperation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in order to implement its economic program, National Bank Chairman Viktor Yuschenko told journalists in Kiev Thursday. His statement followed a meeting between Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma and a visiting IMF delegation.

Yuschenko was positive about the mission's performance, saying "Ukraine's main problem is the need to service foreign debts."

"Some privatization problems remain, but Ukraine shows every intention of solving them," Yuschenko said. "We have quite normal budget prospects and no problems with monetary policy," he added.

According to Yuschenko, external financial sources will cover some 160 trillion out of 427 trillion karbovantsy of the budget deficit standing at 6 percent of GDP. Internal sources will cover the rest of the budget deficit.

The volume of Ukraine's currency market rose from $71 million in November 1994 to $911 million in November 1995, Yuschenko said. The Ukrainian Interbank Currency Exchange has traded over $6 billion since the start of 1995, he added.

Yuschenko predicted a monthly inflation rate of 3 to 4 percent this month. He admitted the National Bank of Ukraine could reduce its refinancing rate. At present, the rate is standing at 114 percent, while that on the interbank market is only 94.3 percent.

IMF To Grant 4th Tranche of Standby Credit

LD2112151395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1351 GMT 21 DEC 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Dec 21 (Interfax-Ukraine) — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) will grant Ukraine the fourth tranche of the stand-by credit provided she carries on the policy of economic reforms. A statement to this effect was made by John Olding-Smee, Director of the IMF Second European Department, after his meeting with President Kuchma of Ukraine in Kiev Thursday.

According to Mr.Olding-Smee, there were no problems in the course of the meeting. It was a very good meeting, indeed, he noted in an answer to a question from "IF-U" [Interfax-Ukraine].

In the course of the meeting, President Kuchma urged the IMF "to take into account the internal and external situation, and only with due account for that draw conclusions about the joint work of the IMF and Ukraine," IMF has been told at the presidential press-service.

The Ukrainian President urged the IMF "to look at Ukraine not only from the viewpoint of figures, but in broader terms".

Mr. Olding-Smee drew the President's attention to the need for a more efficient fulfillment by Ukraine of the IMF program and the commitments undertaken in the drawing up of the Memorandum of cooperation with the IMF. He also noted that Ukraine had made certain success in economic reform and expressed his understanding of the economic and political situation in this country. He declared for closer ties between Ukraine and the IMF and stressed the need for holding joint consultations in the adoption of some or other decisions by Ukraine.

The meeting also covered questions pertaining to privatization and forming of Ukraine's budget. President Kuchma stressed that "the year of 1995 has been the first to end in absence of hyperinflation," the press-service said.

The Ukrainian President also pointed out the need for investments to accelerate privatization.

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Belarus

New Interior Minister, Security Chief Appointed

LD2112155395 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1300 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By BELTA correspondent Vladimir Gulevich for ITAR-TASS]

[FBIS Translated Text] Minsk, 21 Dec — Belarus President Alyaksandr Lukashenka today issued an edict on replacing the heads of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the National Security Committee of the Republic. Major General Valentin Agolets, who used to be first deputy minister of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Belarus, is appointed the new minister of internal affairs. In the opinion of Lukashenka, the new minister is capable of bringing law and order in the bodies of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, where there are frequent cases of corruption and ties with the criminal world.

Maj. Gen. Vladimir Matskevich, 48, has been appointed the new chief of the National Security Committee of Belarus. He used to be chairman of the directorate of the National Security Committee in Brest Region. He has been working in the state security bodies for nearly 20 years.

Other cadre changes in the leadership of the power-wielding ministries of Belarus have also taken place.

Lukashenka Makes Changes Within Ministry

LD2112185495 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0500 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A few more decrees were signed by the president [Alyaksandr Lukashenka]. In accordance with Article 100 of the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, the resignation of Uladzimir Dzyamyanavich Yagoraw, chairman of the State Security Committee, has been accepted.

Major General Faryd Maskutavich Kantsaraw has been appointed first deputy minister of internal affairs of the Republic of Belarus. He has been released from his duties as chief of directorate of military counterintelligence in the State Security Committee.

Valeryy Viktaravich Keza has been appointed first deputy secretary of state of the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus by presidential decree. He has been released from his duties as first deputy chairman of the State Security Committee.

Leanid Talkhanavich Yeryn has been appointed first deputy chairman of the State Security Committee of the Republic of Belarus. He has been released from his duties from the post of deputy chairman of the State Security Committee.

Branislaw Branislavavich Khalyava has been appointed head of the Brest Region directorate of the State Security Committee of the Republic of Belarus.

Uladzimir Antonavich Danko has been appointed chief of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Belarus.

Personnel Reshuffle

WS2212095195 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0828 GMT 22 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Alyaksandr Lukashenka has issued a number of decrees for personnel shuffles at the highest level of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Committee for State Security. In particular, Major-General Valyantsin Ahalets has been appointed as Minister for Internal Affairs. He will also perform the functions of the chairman of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Collegium. Simultaneously Mr Ahalets has been relieved of the post of First Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs and Border Troops Commander-in-Chief. The latter post is now vacant. State Secretary of the Security Council Viktar Sheyman has been released from discharging the duties of the minister of internal affairs and the chairman of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Collegium.

According to the information received, Mr Ahalets was born on October 24 1950 in the Zhytkavichy district of the Homel region. In 1973 he graduated from the Higher Military School of Internal Affairs in Ordzhonikidze, and in 1984 - from the Frunze Military Academy in Moscow. In 1994 he completed the full course of studies at the Academy of the General Headquarters of the Armed Forces of Russia. He was decorated with the Order of the Red Star for his participation in the Fergana hostilities. After service in units of internal troops in Central Asia and Siberia he returned to Minsk in 1992. There he served as Chief of the Board of Internal Troops at the Ministry of Internal Affairs. He was given the rank of major-general in 1993. He was appointed as Border Troops Commander-in-Chief in August 1994.

Major-General Faryd Kantseraw has been appointed as First Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs and relieved of the post of Chief of the Counter-Intelligence Board. The latter post is now vacant.

The former minister of internal affairs in the Kebich government, Mr Uladzimir Danko, has been appointed as Chief of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

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In accordance with Point 4 of Article 100 of the Constitution, the President has accepted the resignation of Chairman of the State Committee for State Security Uladzimir Yahoraw who was elected as an MP and intends to work in Parliament on a regular basis. An agreement in this regard was reached between Uladzimir Yahoraw and Alyaksandr Lukashenka as far back as spring this year.

According to a Presidential Decree, Valeryy Kez has been appointed as First Deputy State Secretary of the Security Council. The same Decree has relieved him of the post of First Deputy Chairman of the State Committee for State Security. Mr Kez was regarded at one time as the most probable candidate to fill the post of KGB chief.

Colonel Leanid Yeryn has become his successor in the post of First Deputy Chairman of the KGB. Before the new appointment Mr Yeryn was Deputy Chairman. From 1989 to 1995 Mr Yeryn served in the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation. Uladzimir Matskevich has been replaced in the post of Chief of the KGB Board for the Brest region by Branislaw Khalyava who was Deputy Chief of the KGB Board for Minsk and the Minsk Region before this appointment.

New Chief of Staff Transfers From Russian Army

MM2212112195 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 22 Dec 95 p 2

[Report by Valeriy Kovalev: "Belarusian Army Has New Chief of Main Staff"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Minsk — By Belarusian presidential edict Lieutenant General Alyaksandr Chumakov has been appointed chief of the Armed Forces Main Staff and first deputy defense minister. This post has remained vacant since June this year following the well-known changes in the top leadership of the Belarusian military department. Several years ago Gen. Chumakov was Belarusian Military District chief of staff. Following the collapse of the unified USSR Armed Forces he served in the Russian Army. Of late he has been under the command of the commander in chief of the Russian Ground Forces. His present appointment constitutes practical confirmation of the accord reached during the recent meeting of the leaders of the Russian and Belarusian military departments regarding the possibility of servicemen's being transferred from one army to the other.

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Kazakhstan

Nazarbayev: Russian Election Will Not Affect Relations

LD2112130395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1053 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, Dec 21 (Interfax) — The outcome of elections to the State Duma "will have no effect on Russia's policy and its relations with Kazakhstan", Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev said in an interview with Interfax in Almaty today. "In fact, nothing has changed after the elections in Russia, the balance of forces has remained the same, only someone has changed places," Nazarbayev noted, stressing that his republic feels like doing business as before "with Russia's new Duma and leadership alike."

Voicing hope that the lower house of the Russ[illegible] parliament will ratify the bilateral agreement on simplified citizenship, Nazarbayev wished that this would contribute to closer ties and economic integration.

"I hope the new deputies will solve all these issues more actively than before," Nazarbayev said.

Supports Closer Ties With Russian Military

LD2112170695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1643 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By Ivan Zakharchenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Almaty, December 21 (Itar-Tass) — Kazakhstan should maintain closer relations of partnership with the Russian military to carry out the army reform, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said on Thursday.

Russian experts could assist Kazakhstan in conducting military exercises, personnel training, and drafting normative instruments, Nazarbayev said at a session of the country's Defence Ministry.

Participants in the session stroke up the results of the Kazakh Army and Navy activity in 1995, and outlined their tasks in 1996.

The perfection of collective security within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States, which may result from economic integration, is of paramount importance in the strengthening of the country's defence capacity, he stressed.

Says Army Must Discard 'Alliance Neutrality'

LD2112143295 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1200 GMT 21 Dec 95

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the opinion of President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev, the Republic's Army must discard its alliance neutrality [soyuznicheskiy neytralitet] and take on the characteristics of the national armed forces of a sovereign, independent state. The head of state declared this today at a sitting of the military collegium of Kazakhstan's Defense Ministry.

According to Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan is strengthening its partnership relations with NATO. [Video shows photograph of Nazarbayev]

Increases Salaries, Pensions

LD2112142295 Almaty Kazakh Radio First Program Network in Russian 1500 GMT 20 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] With the aim of providing state social guarantees for the population of the country, the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan [Nursultan Nazarbayev] has issued an edict resolving to increase the average annual salaries of workers in state budget-funded organizations in real terms in 1996. The average annual pension and allowances are to be increased at the following rates: pensions — no less than 1.7-fold, unemployment benefits — no less than 1.5-fold, and other allowances — no less than 1.6-fold.

The edict in particular stipulates that the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the heads of regional, town, and district administrations should be responsible for making targeted social support more effective for low-income sections of the population.

The text of the edict will be published in full in the press.

Issues Edict on Judges, Courts

LD2212105095 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0838 GMT 22 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Almaty, 22 Dec (ITAR-TASS) — President Nazarbayev's edict, "On Courts and the Status of Judges in the Republic of Kazakhstan," has been made public today. It says that judges exercise their powers in the name of the republic, independently, and in absolute accordance with the constitution and the law. The edict has the force of constitutional law and comes into effect from 1 January 1996.

According to the document, judicial authority extends to all issues and disputes concerning violations of the

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constitution, laws, or any other normative legal acts or international treaties of the republic. All state bodies, organizations, officials, and citizens in the country are obliged to comply with the verdicts of the courts.

The judicial system is made up of the Supreme Court and the republic's local courts — comprising regional courts and the Almaty City Court, which has the status of a regional court; the Military Court of the Kazakh Armed Forces; district, town, and military courts. Specialized and extraordinary courts can be created — for example economic, taxation, family, juvenile, or administrative courts, or others — which will have the status of district (and town) courts. The president also has the right to establish area courts.

The edict stipulates that legal proceedings in the republic are to be conducted in the state language, with Russian being officially used on an equal footing. They can also be conducted in the language of the majority of the population in a particular area. The conduct of all court cases is to be open, with the exception of instances when an open hearing could result in state secrets, or military, official, or commercial secrets being divulged, or when the private life or personal family secrets of a citizen have to be protected from the public in order to ensure the safety of those taking part in legal proceedings.

Air Force Unit Receives Russian Planes; More to Follow

MM2212113095 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 22 Dec 95 p 2

[Report by Yuriy Gavrilov: "Kazakhstani Air Force Replenished With Russian Aircraft"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kzyl-Orda — A Kazakhstani aviation unit stationed in Kzyl-Orda Oblast has received eight MiG-29 fighters. These aircraft have been sent to the republic in accordance with a Russian Government decision. Military cooperation agreements signed previously by the two states also make provision for several more Russian Su-25 and Su-27 aircraft to be transferred to the Kazakhstani Armed Forces.

Kyrgyzstan

President Akayev Comments on Talks With Yeltsin

LD2112204395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1804 GMT 21 Dec 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Experts in CIS and Russia's relations with newly independent countries of Central Asia believe that the Wednesday visit made by Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev to Moscow and his talk with Russian President Boris Yeltsin are significant events.

Following his meeting with Yeltsin in the Barvikha sanatorium, Akayev called on the Interfax Moscow headquarters where he spent more than an hour talking to journalists. What follows is a detailed account of what he had to say.

Border Protection, Fighting Drugs and Weapons Trafficking

Russia and Kyrgyzstan will step up efforts in joint protection of the Tajik-Afghan border to curb the inflow of drugs and weapons from Afghanistan. Akayev said that Yeltsin and himself agreed on this on December 20.

Akayev said that the Kyrgyz special services and Russian border guards have closed five areas to possible smuggling of weapons and drugs across the Afghan border. Numerous smugglers have been detained and law enforcement agents who covered up for the smugglers were unmasked.

According to Akayev, the bilateral cooperation on the Tajik- Afghan border has acquired a new dimension. Kyrgyzstan has decided to keep its battalion on the border until at least the end of 1996.

Akayev said that following the end of his treatment, Yeltsin will go to China where he and the leaders of China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan will sign an agreement on confidence building steps in the border areas.

This agreement will be very important for the entire Central Asian region, Akayev said. He declined, however, to disclose the mechanism of the agreement before it is signed.

Akayev said that the document became possible chiefly through the efforts of the Russian diplomacy. He added that Chinese officials showed good will in the process.

'Expects' To Win Presidential Election

LD2112204195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1834 GMT 21 Dec 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Akayev said that, as early in the race, he expects to win at least 60 percent of the votes in the presidential elections scheduled for December 24.

Out of numerous candidates in the beginning of the election race only three are still running, himself, who is called by the people scientist-statesman, Medetkan

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Sherimkulov, former parliament speaker, and Absamat Masaliyev, former leader of the local Communist Party, who, Akayev said, is known as the communist dinosaur.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: A hunger strike of three former candidates, Deputy Prime Minister Zhdumgalbek Amanbayev and Mamat Aibolayev and Omunbek Tekebayev, MPs, was continuing in the Government House in Bishkek Thursday. They demand that they be allowed to run for presidency. The country's Supreme Court overturned the Central Electoral Committee's decision to register them.

Tajikistan

Rakhmanov: Russian Elections Will Not Affect Relations

LD2012195295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1731 GMT 20 Dec 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: compiled by Anna Kovalyova, Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Boris Yunanov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Emomali Rakhmanov says Russia's latest general election was the most democratic one in its history and is an indication of genuine democratic reforms there, Rakhmanov told a news conference in Dushanbe on Tuesday.

He described voting results as Russia's own affair though saying this would in no way affect bilateral relations. To make his case, Rakhmanov said representative of eight different factions of the State Duma coming on a fact-finding mission to the Afghan border this spring were unanimous about the prospects of bilateral relations including economic and military aid to Tajikistan. He said that military cooperation with Moscow was covering the protection of CIS southern borders.

On the latest round of peace talks with opposition leaders, the president said he did not expect a quick success at the start of negotiations in Ashgabat. At the same time, he said the negotiating process was under way with the two sides trying to find compromise on the issues facing them, an indication of their commitment to peaceful ways of resolving the conflict. Rakhmanov said all of this was giving solid grounds for a successful completion of the Ashgabat round. He pledged the government delegation would not walk out of the negotiation no matter how long it continued before reaching a comprehensive settlement. "What is at stake is the country's future," Rakhmanov said.

IF Note: The fifth round of peace talks getting under way in Ashgabat on November 30 is expected to take several months to complete because of the need to resolve a wide range of issues including military, political and economic problems as well as repatriation of refugees.

In this connection Rakhmanov said that with gradual normalization and the advancement of the negotiating process, foreign investors were displaying greater business interest in Tajikistan. As an example, the president pointed to his recent tour of India and the United Arab Emirates yielding good results including the economic area. Rakhmanov spoke of offering as many as 18 cooperation projects to the governments of India and the UAE and that were hopes that appropriate contracts would be signed soon.

Turkmenistan

Speaker Fetes Iranian First Vice President Habibi

LD2112104295 Tehran IRNA in English 0731 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ashgabat, Dec 21 (IRNA) — Parliament Speaker of Turkmenistan Sakhat N. Muradov said Wednesday that bilateral cooperation between his country and Iran has remarkably expanded within a short period of time, expecting a brighter future for Ashgabat-Tehran ties.

Speaking at a dinner reception he hosted in honor of the visiting Iranian First Vice President Hassan Habibi Wednesday night, he said both Iran and Turkmenistan shared common cultural and religious bonds.

He described as rich and valuable the parliamentary system in the Islamic Republic of Iran and called for further expansion of cooperation between the parliaments of the two countries.

Habibi, in reply, appreciated the warm hospitality extended to the Iranian delegation by the Turkmen Government and nation.

The Iranian official also pointed to the long-standing common bonds between the two countries and stressed that after the collapse of communism in the former Soviet Union such bonds paved the way for further expansion of Tehran-Ashgabat bilateral ties.

Government To Launch 'Economic Transformations' Program

LD2112101395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0908 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By Lyudmila Glazovskaya]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ASHGABAT December 21 (Itar-Tass) — The Central Asian republic of Turkmenistan plans to launch a major programme of eco-

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nomic transformations soon and to attract foreign investments in developing its rich gas fields and other natural resources, as well as the transportation network and tourism.

"We are preparing to adopt a large-scale programme of efficient economic transformations which are called to quickly ensure for Turkmenistan the top international standards in the sphere of the financial and banking system, in rendering services, in easy terms and other privileges for investors, international financial institutions, etc.," Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov told Tass on Thursday.

"Turkmenistan is interested in a wide participation of foreign investors in its development", he said adding that "we always keep our word".

Niyazov said his republic also plans to create "a modern transportation infrastructure" and named, in particular, the project of the "North-South railway corridor which will link Europe with Asia along the shortest route".

Besides, international tourism becomes an important branch of industry for Turkmenistan which has already adopted a programme of tourism development up to the middle of the next century, according to Niyazov.

"There are unique historical monuments on the territory of Turkmenistan which could not develop for objective reasons in the previous (Soviet) period and were simply closed for international eyes", Niyazov said.

The president, who is called Turkmenbashi (the Father of all Turkmens) in his republic, pledged that human rights are a priority for his government which would work to promote the process "linked with the bloc of humanitarian issues".

"Turkmenistan proceeds from the fundamental thesis that man is the supreme value of society... Turkmenistan recognises and respects the basic human rights adopted by the world community and fixed in the norms of international law which creates political, economic, legal and other guarantees for their efficient implementation", Niyazov stressed.

Uzbekistan

Sultanov Replaces Mutalov as Prime Minister

LD2112161095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1557 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By Vilor Niyazmatov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TASHKENT December 21 (Itar-Tass) — Otkir Sultanov became Uzbekistan's new Prime Minister. He replaced Abdulkhasim Mutalov who held the post for four years. The Prime Minister was appointed on Thursday at a meeting of the fourth session of the Uzbekistan parliament at the proposal of President Islam Karimov.

Otkir Sultanov, 46, Uzbek, worked as deputy prime minister for the past five years, being simultaneously Uzbekistan Minister for Foreign Economic Relations.

Karimov Address on Economic, Political Reforms

LD2112190095 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1623 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TASHKENT, Dec 21 (Interfax) — Uzbekistan's parliament dismissed Prime Minister Abdulkhasim Mutalov on Thursday and elected a new prime minister, former Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Trade Minister Otkir Sultanov.

Addressing the parliament, President Islam Karimov said that, having embarked on the road to independence, Uzbekistan is working out its own program for building the state and society and reforming all areas of life.

With reference to the results of the year now ending, Karimov said it was a year of building the foundations of economic and political reforms, of holding the country's first open parliamentary elections on a multiparty basis, and creating new power structures.

Clear trends toward economic improvement are in evidence, the president pointed out. Enterprises in the basic industries - oil and gas extraction, chemical industry, electricity production and machinebuilding - worked particularly stably in the outgoing year.

With reference to the tasks to be accomplished in 1996, Karimov said the top priority goal is to strengthen the national currency.

He also finds it necessary to expand his country's export potential and reduce imports of energy resources.

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Armenia

Visiting German Foreign Minister on Russian Elections

LD2112200195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1901 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YEREVAN, Dec 21 (Interfax) — It is the 1996 presidential elections in Russia that will be decisive for Europe and Germany in particular, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel told a press conference in Yerevan Thursday.

Asked about Bonn's assessment of the Duma election results, Kinkel said no radical changes in the Russian-German relations should be expected in the near future following the communist victory at the December 17 elections.

For his part, Armenian Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan supported his German colleague, saying the parliamentary elections in Russia were democratic. This gives hope that next June's presidential elections will be democratic too, he added.

Meets President, Signs Agreements

NC2112171295 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1500 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Armenian Presidential Press Service just reported that President Levon Ter-Petrosyan today received German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel and members of his delegation Ambassador Frank Lambakh; (?Klaus Noybert), head of the Foreign Ministry political desk; (?Eno Barge), director of the Foreign Ministry political department; Foreign Ministry spokesman (?Mardin Ergmann); and (?Helmut Geokel), head of the economics department .

Matters relating to bilateral ties and EU-Armenian relations were discussed during the meeting. The current state and possible future developments of the Karabakh peace process were also examined. The sides also broached matters relating to regional and international politics of mutual interest during the businesslike meeting.

Armenian Vice President Gagik Harutyunyan; Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan; Norbert Heinze, German charge d'affaires ad interim in Armenia; and other officials attended the meeting.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel held a news conference at the Armenian government guest house today. Our correspondent Anush Harutyunyan was there.

[Begin recording] ¡Harutyunyan] Armenian Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan and German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel signed a number of documents today: An agreement between Armenia and Germany on encouragement and mutual protection of capital investments, on cultural cooperation, and on German tombs in Armenia.

In welcoming the delegation, Vahan Papazyan highly assessed the German foreign minister's visit to Armenia considering it as a manifestation of Germany's goodwill gesture to develop ties with Armenia. He also thanked him for the substantial humanitarian assistance provided by Germany to Armenia in recent years.

In his thanks for the warm reception, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said in particular:

[Kinkel [in German with superimposed Armenian translation] I give great importance to my official visit to Yerevan. I thank you all for the warm reception. Armenia has a weighty role in Transcaucasia and I hope that the Nagorno-Karabakh problem will be resolved positively. We are trying to help the peace process within the Minsk Group.

[Harutyunyan] Klaus Kinkel also noted that Germany was closely following the parliamentary elections held in Armenia on 5 July and was encouraging the Armenian authorities in their efforts to establish democracy. [end recording]

Views Karabakh Conflict

NC2112201495 Yerevan SNARK in English 1702 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, December 21. (SNARK) — Today, Vahan Papazyan and Klaus Kinkel, Armenian and German foreign ministers, signed an agreement in Yerevan to encourage and protect investments. They also signed another two intergovernmental agreements on tombs of German POWs in Armenia and cultural cooperation.

During a press conference held after the meeting, the two sides expressed will to develop multilateral ties. According to Kinkel, Germany will continue to support Armenia to construct a democratic state. Vahan Papazyan, in turn, said that an agreement on the ways of Armeno-German relations is being drafted now.

The German Foreign Minister noted the importance of stable situation in the region connecting Europe and Asia and regarded the resolution to the Karabakh problem as one of the necessary terms. The Karabakh conflict settlement should stipulate the withdrawal of troops from the occupied areas and guarantees of Karabakh's security. The determination of NKR [Republic of Mountainous Karabakh] temporary status before the end of peace negotiations, the return of refugees to their homes

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are to be provided as well, he said. The conflicting sides must intensify the talks both within the framework of the Minsk OSCE group, and through direct contracts. Germany, as a Minsk Group member, has made several conceptual proposals concerning these issues.

According to the Armenian Foreign Minister, Germany's proposals containing many positive points should be seriously considered.

Preliminary Agreement With EU Signed in Brussels

NC2112162095 Yerevan ARAGIL ELECTRONIC NEWS BULLETIN in English 0901 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan ("Azg" daily - Noyan Tapan), 12/21/95 — Speaking on the Armenian TV, ROA [Republic of Armenia] Minister on Links with CIS and International Economic Institutions Gagik Shahbazyan stressed that a preliminary agreement between Armenia and European Union has been signed in Brussels. No additional information was reported, except for Armenia is 6th CIS country signing a similar agreement with the European Union.

Azerbaijan

Aliyev Meets Russian Presidential Envoy

LD2112205695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1901 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BAKU, Dec 21 (Interfax) — Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev received the special envoy of the Russian president, Vladimir Kazimirov, in Baku Thursday evening.

To begin the meeting, Kazimirov told journalists that he had brought a personal letter from Russian President Boris Yeltsin containing new initiatives on Armenian-Azerbaijani settlement.

For his part, Aliyev reiterated his repeatedly voiced position that "Russia may play the decisive role in the Armenian-Azerbaijani settlement."

According to Aliyev, there are no substantial settlement results, except for a ceasefire lasting already for 19 months. "We cannot stay in this no peace no war state much longer," he added. He called on Moscow to take more resolute and concrete steps and make a breakthrough in the settlement process.

After the meeting with journalists, Aliyev invited Kazimirov to discuss tete-a-tete "Russia's new initiatives outside the framework of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] Minsk Conference."

Pledges Friendly Relations With Russia

LD2112203995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1804 GMT 21 Dec 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Geydar Aliyev has reaffirmed commitment to friendly relations with Russia at a meeting with Russian Ambassador Oleg Blokhin in Baku on Wednesday.

He expressed satisfaction over dynamic relations between various departments on both sides including security and energy ministries.

On social issues and the anti-crime campaign, Aliyev said the Azeri authorities had stepped up the fight against extortion racket and gangsterism. He also pledged no discrimination against members of the country's Russian community.

For his part, the ambassador thanked Aliyev for helping with restitution of 15 out of the 63 apartments to ethnic Russians who owned them before.

He also spoke of preliminary results from Russia's general election though disagreeing with those who consider them to mark an end to Russian democracy. Blokhin said Russia was firmly on the road of democracy and setting great store by its relationship with Azerbaijan.

Moscow To Continue Role in Armenian-Azeri Talks

LD2112211295 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1713 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Sevindzh Abdullayeva and Viktor Shulman]

[FBIS Translated Text] Baku, 21 Dec — Russia will continue to do all that she can and all that is possible for a quick and full settlement to the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict and, first and foremost, for continued progress in the peace talks. This was said in a message from Russian President Boris Yeltsin to the Azerbaijan President Geydar Aliyev. The message was handed over this evening to the head of the Azerbaijan state by Vladimir Kazimirov, the plenipotentiary representative of the Russian president and special envoy, who has arrived from Moscow.

The Russian diplomat, who is representing his country as co-chairman of the Minsk group of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] in Nagorno-Karabakh, believes the present situation in the conflict zone is right for "joint efforts toward what is known as a breakthrough." There has been no bloodshed now for almost more than six months and a cease-fire is

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being observed in the conflict zone. Kazimirov believes the stabilization of the political situation in Azerbaijan and Armenia is a significant factor in a peace settlement. All this allows for more productive results, Vladimir Kazimirov said.

He acknowledged that Russia has done a lot for peace in the region within the Minsk OSCE group. Geydar Aliyev considered Boris Yeltsin's message as providing a possibility for a new stage in the peace settlement, saying that "Azerbaijan awaits more effective action from Russia in this direction." The head of the Azerbaijan state commented on the necessity to consider the interests of both countries — Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Those at the talks preferred to discuss Russian proposals for the peace settlement behind closed doors.

Georgia

Shevardnadze Announces Structural Changes in Government

LD2112210495 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1900 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, immediately after Georgia's new government met, President Eduard Shevardnadze and State Minister Nikoloz Lekishvili held a news conference devoted to structural changes within the republic's executive.

[Correspondent Mikhail Vardzelashvili] According to Shevardnadze, after the changes are implemented, ministers will have more rights than before; however, this, in turn, will require greater professionalism of them. Each minister will become a kind of prime minister in his sphere, Shevardnadze said, while a state minister will provide a link between the president and the government. According to Nikoloz Lekishvili, there are plans to set up a state chancellery which will regulate mutual relations between the ministers while all the ministers will be equally responsible to the president. Shevardnadze said that a stage-by-stage reduction of the administration apparatus has been envisaged with emphasis on the professional qualities of members of the executive. The ministers will meet once a month.

Pleased With Parliament Support

LD2112203295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1623 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, Dec 21 (Interfax) — President Eduard Shevardnadze said he is satisfied with the virtually unanimous support given to his candidates for ministerial posts by the parliament.

This increases the responsibility of executive authorities, he told journalists before his meeting with the ministers in Tbilisi on Thursday.

Shevardnadze underscored the role played by the minister of state as a link between the new consultative body, which the government is under Georgia's legislation, and the president. He is confident that cooperation between the president and government will be very effective, since Georgia's present government is a team of like-minded people, Shevardnadze said.

The meeting between Shevardnadze and members of the Cabinet of Ministers, finally endorsed by the parliament on Wednesday, was held behind closed doors. No details have been given.

Demands Actions Not Words From Ministers

LD2112202095 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 1800 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze held a meeting with the newly elected ministers today. This was their first meeting after the Georgian Supreme Council had approved the candidatures of the ministers nominated by the president. The meeting focused upon future long-term cooperation between the president and the ministers.

Eduard Shevardnadze gave the ministers his first advice, which was probably a warning too — no superfluous words, no excuses, and no shifting of blame upon others. Only action. This is how our future meetings should proceed, the president said.

Yet another detail of the meeting. As far as relations between the press and the authorities are concerned, according to the president, ministers have to work in close cooperation with the press. Let us see how the executive authorities are going to follow this advice.

Shevardnadze's Party Denies Rumors of Possible Split

LD2112210995 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 1800 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Gia Baramidze, the newly elected general secretary of the Union of Citizens of Georgia [UCG], and Lana Ghoghoberidze, the leader of the parliamentary faction of the union, held a news conference in the head office of the UCG today. The UCG is still in the focus of the Georgian mass media. Today's news conference, which was attended by numerous representatives of the press and TV, has once again confirmed this.

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The profound interest toward the news conference might have been caused by rumors about alleged disagreements among members of the union. Ms. Lana Gboghoberidze said that the rumors did not correspond to the reality, and added that the UCG was an association of like-minded people and it was absurd to assume that the union could disintegrate. Gia Baramidze aired the same point of view.

The organizers of the news conference said that they believed the country was advancing along a truly democratic path. No longer does an illegal armed force, which could jeopardize the stability of Georgia's development, exist in the country. Therefore, the newly elected ministers will have a good opportunity to fully reveal their abilities.

At the end of the news conference, the UCG leaders said that the union was prepared for sensible and constructive cooperation with Russia, regardless of who becomes a leading force.

Human Rights Association Head Applies for Asylum

LD2012180195 Tbilisi IPRINDA in Russian 1500 GMT 20 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi, 20 Dec — According to an agency correspondent, Giorgi Kervalishvili, the president of the Association for the Protection of Human Rights, on 19 December met with Inna Lebel, the deputy ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Germany to Georgia. Kervalishvili spoke about the protection of human rights in Georgia, noting that basic human rights were still being breached, the conditions in prisons were unbearable, peaceful rallies were being dispersed and dissidents prosecuted. He said that he himself was under a constant moral and psychological pressure from the authorities.

Kervalishvili handed Mrs. Lebel a letter addressed to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, in which he applied for political asylum in Germany.

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Estonia

Vahi Praises Estonian-Russian Troop Pullout Accord

LD2112205495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1901 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TALLINN, Dec 21 (Interfax) — Estonian Prime Minister Tiit Vahi highly praised yesterday's ratification of the Estonian-Russian accords on the troop pullout and social guarantees to retired officers and their families.

The ratification opens a path to another pressing issue in the Russian-Estonian relations, the border treaty, Vahi told Interfax Thursday. "However, both sides should work out mutually acceptable positions," he added.

One of Estonia's main political priorities is to normalize relations with Russia, Vahi said. He voiced his desire to meet his Russian counterpart, Viktor Chernomyrdin. The ratification of the military accords makes such a meeting possible, he said.

The presidents of Russia and Estonia, Boris Yeltsin and Lennart Meri, had signed the accords in Moscow on July 26, 1994. The Russian parliament ratified them in October 1995.

Foreign Minister Remarks on Russian Relations

WS2212095995 Tallinn ETA in English 1731 GMT 21 Dec 95

["News Release"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, December 21 — Estonian-Russian relations have never been as good as lately during the last 500 years, Estonian Foreign Minister Siim Kallas said in a report on Estonia's foreign political situation on Thursday.

"If we wish to further improve the relations, we will have to ask ourselves whether we are ready to acknowledge our state as the successor to Estonian SSR and the events of 1940 as expression of free will of the Estonian nation and thus give up our choice to belong to the Western world," Kallas said. He added that as Estonian state would not survive such a foreign policy "putting in order the relations with Russia" has an important place.

Kallas said that Estonia's and Russia's estimations on the 1940 events in Estonia are extremely different, from which the other tensions in the Estonian-Russian relations come from.

Foreign Minister pointed out as more important problems Russia's activities against Estonia's joining NATO and other Western security structures, Russia's accusals of human rights violations in Estonia, attempts to meddle in problems of Estoniaos orthodox congregations and attempts to "mess with" the border regime and create an impression of Estonia as an unstable state.

Although the general public has got an impression that Estonian-Russian border has almost been agreed upon, this is not the case in reality, Kallas said. Although a lot of technical work to specify the present border line has been done during the last year, the solution of the problem remains behind interpretation of Tartu Peace Treaty in connection with the border agreements.

Kallas said that Russia is in no hurry as far as border agreement is concerned and Estonia has no reason to sacrifice the contents of the agreement to time limits.

'33 Problems' Hindering Relations

LD2112203195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1623 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TALLINN, Dec 21 (Interfax) — Relations between Estonia and Russia will be normalized when Russia gives up obstructing Estonia joining NATO and other western security organizations.

Estonian Foreign Minister Siim Kallas told parliament Thursday that the improvement of bilateral relations depends on solution to 33 problems.

Kallas said that Russia should give up describing Estonia as an unstable country where human rights are violated on a mass scale and cease interference into Estonia's policy vis-a-vis religious organizations.

Kallas believes that Russia does not wish to fully recognize Estonia's independence. "As a logical result, our people do not trust Moscow," he said.

Integration into Western European structures such as the European Union and NATO and normalization of relations with Russia are Estonia's top foreign policy priorities, Kallas said.

Latvia

Ulmanis on Russian Relations After Elections

LD2212093395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0643 GMT 22 Dec 95

[By Galina Kuchina]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] RIGA December 22 (Itar-Tass) — Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis believes that the new political make-up in the Russian State Duma "will not influence in the near future" the relations between the two neighbouring countries. This view is shared by many Latvian politicians.

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At the same time, the results of the elections among Russian citizens living in Latvia evoked a rather sharp response in the country: most of them supported communists. Expressing the view, which is widely spread here, the Neatkariga Rita Avize newspaper wrote: "The results of the Sunday voting of Russians from Riga, Daugavpiels and Liepaja confirmed once again the old truth: what is alien cannot be integrated."

Parliament Approves New 7-Party Coalition Goverment

LD2112164495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1608 GMT 21 Dec 95

[By Galina Kruchina]

RIGA, December 21 (Itar-Tass) - The Latvian Sejm (Parliament) voted 70 out of 100 to pass a motion of confidence in a seven-party government, the first in Latvian history with such a great number of parties.

Businessman and former Deputy Minister of Agriculture Andris Skele, 37, is the new prime minister.

The new government should raise the spirit of private enterprise, ensure the stability of the local currency, improve the investment climate, and create conditions which will realize the people's potential, Skele said.

He also said "friendly and stable relations with the eastern neighbour" were a requirement.

Parliamentarians belonging to the seven government-making parties ensured the adoption of the confidence vote. "For Latvia" faction members, who voted against the new government, claimed that Skele's companies supported the election campaign of the seven parties which entered the government, and called the new Cabinet "a new Mafia-style firm of Skele's."

According to Interior Minister Janis Adamsons, the new prime minister bears moral responsibility for "the enormous damage" inflicted on the state when he was the agriculture minister.

Ex-prime minister, however, said Skele's case was a "bluff". Other MPs were also sceptical about the minister's accusations.

New Government Detailed; PM Outlines Policy

WS2212095595 Tallinn BNS in English 1600 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riga, Dec 21, BNS — The Latvian parliament (Saeima) has approved a new Cabinet set up by Andris Skele, one of the richest and most influential entrepreneurs in the country.

Thursday's vote of 70 deputies for and 24 deputies against ended two-and-a-half months of political uncertainty following the parliamentary elections in early October, which produced a fractured Saeima divided into two equal blocs.

Skele was the third candidate nominated by Latvian president Guntis Ulmanis to form a new government. The two previous candidates, Fatherland and Freedom (FF) chairman Maris Grinblats and Democratic Party Saimnieks (DPS) leader Ziedonis Cevers, had each failed to obtain the parliament's support by an extremely narrow margin.

Skele, who is not a parliamentary deputy and who has no party affiliation, was supported by six of the nine factions elected to the Saeima, whose members will also form the new government.

Skele told the parliament his main economic goals as prime minister will include maintaining the stability of Latvia's national currency, the lat; balancing the state budget; creating a real estate market in which foreign companies could participate; improving the investment climate for local and foreign entrepreneurs; and developjng the country's transit facilities.

Skele cited Latvia's incorporation into European economic structures and ultimately full European Union (EU) membership as another long-term economic priority. "Bringing our economic legislation up to its [the EU's] standards would be an important step in this direction," he said.

The new prime minister said that Latvia would continue to strive for NATO membership and pursue an active role in other international oranizations. At the same time, Latvia will attempt to establish a stable relationship with Russia and sign additional interstate treaties with its eastern neighbor. Skele said talks will continue with Russia over the delimitation of the countries' common border and that Latvia would ask Russia to officially recognize the occupation of the Baltic countries by the Soviet Union in 1940.

Fifteen deputies of the People's Movement for Latvia, six from the National Harmony Party and five from the Socialist Party deputies did not participate in the formation of the government.

Latvia's Way faction deputy Janis Adamsons did not support the government on the grounds that in his opinion, Skele's business activities are connected with illegal activities. Adamsons, however, has failed to provide evidence to this effect and has been publicly rebuked by his party members and by the country's president.

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The final list of government ministers and ministers of state is as follows:

Prime Minister Andris Skele (entrepreneur)
Deputy Prime Minister without portfolio Ziedonis Cevers (Saimnieks)
Deputy Prime Minister and Education and Science Minister Maris Grinblats (Fatherland and Freedom)
Interior Minister Dainis Turlais (Saimnieks)
Foreign Minister Valdis Birkavs (Latvia's Way)
Finance Minister Aivars Kreituss (Saimnieks)
Economics Minister Guntars Krasts (Fatherland)
Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Andrejs Krastins (LNNK)
Communications Minister Vilis Kristopans (Latvia's Way)
Welfare Minister Vladimirs Makarovs (Fatherland)
Justice Minister Dzintars Rasnacs (Fatherland)
Deputy Prime Minister and Environmental Protection and Regional Development Minister Maris Gailis (Latvia's Way)
Culture Minister Ojars Sparitis (Farmers Union)
Deputy Prime Minister and Agriculture Minister Alberts Kauls (Unity Party)

The government will include two special tasks ministers: Aleksandrs Kirsteins (LNNK) will be the minister for European affairs and Ernests Jurkans (Saimnieks) has been appointed the minister for local government issues.

In the Finance Ministry, Aija Poca will be the minister of state for state revenue, while Sarmite Jegere will be the minister of state for credit policy.

In the Economics Ministry, Eriks Kaza (Saimnieks) will be the minister of state for industrial and privatization policy issues.

The Foreign Ministry's state minister will be Juris Sinka (Fatherland), while the environmental state minister in the Environmental and Regional Development Ministry will be Indulis Emsis (Green Party).

Other state ministers include the Agriculture Ministry's cooperation state minister Janis Muiznieks (Unity Party), state minister for fishfarming issues — Ivars Amolins (Unity Party), state minister in the Education and Science Ministry — Janis Gaigals (Latvia's Way), state minister for higher education and science issues — Peteris Cimdins, labor affairs state minister in the Welfare Ministry — Andris Berzins (Latvia's Way), the health state minister — Juris Vinkelis and forestry state minister in the Agriculture Ministry — Arvids Ozols (Green Party).

The government is to decrease expenses at state establishments by cutting staff and liquidating institutions which have the same functions. It may also cut foreign embassy expenditures.

In the agricultural sphere, the government has pledged to ensure that residents are supplied with Latvian-made foodstuffs and observe Latvian farmers' interests during the integration process into the European Union.

The government also plans to perfect the mechanism of granting subsidies and credits to farmers.

In the sphere of education, the government promises to gradually increase teachers' salaries so that they were not lower than the average salaries of civil servants.

Skele, who is 37 years old, is married and has two daughters. He is a graduate of the University of Agriculture and worked for nine years in an agricultural research institution.

He also worked at the Agriculture Ministry as deputy minister until 1993, when he was appointed acting minister.

Skele is either a part owner or board member of over a dozen large Latvian enterprises connected with the food processing industry, several of which were under the control of the country's agriculture ministry while Skele was deputy minister and then acting minister in 1993.

Skele has also been acting director general of the Latvian Privatization Agency, council member of the Unibanka and council chairman of the Rigas Vini (Riga Wines) company.

In 1995, Skele began to consult the Privatization Agency and in October was elected council chairman of the Latvian Shipping Company. He has promised to cease his business activities during his term as prime minister in order to avoid a conflict of interest.

Lithuania

Defense Minister: No Alternative to NATO for Security

LD1912215095 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in English 2000 GMT 19 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Lithuanian Defense Minister Linas Linkevicius says the only guarantor of Lithuania's security is membership in NATO and there is no other alternative of collective security for the country.

On Tuesday [19 December] Mr Linkevicius answered questions at the Lithuanian parliament. The defense minister tried to calm down some members of the

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parliament who were concerned of the great assignations to the military foreseen in next year's budget.

Mr Linkevicius expressed hope that the Lithuanian army should become stronger after the decision was recently passed to allow the use of foreign loans for equipping the Lithuanian army. Although we are not able to participate in all programs, Lithuania has been mentioned in the West as one of the fastest progress making young countries, said the defense minister.

Compliance to the Western standards is not the main condition for being admitted to NATO, Mr Linkevicius said. According to him, solid democracy in the country, civilian control over the armed forces and good relations with the neighboring states are much more important.

Parliament Approves Sending Troops to Bosnia

LD2012123295 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 20 Dec 95

[Report by Guoda Salciute at the Seimas on 20 December — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The first voting today was for the participation of the Lithuanian army detachment in the peace enforcement operation under NATO command in the former Yugoslavia. Sixty-seven Seimas members voted in favor of this decision, six voted against and eight members abstained from voting.

The argument supporting the decision was the Lithuanian detachment to the former Yugoslavia is our country's contribution to regional peace in Europe, boosting Lithuania's image on an international scale. It is also a good training for the Lithuanian servicemen.

Those opposing troop allocation maintain that the peace in Yugoslavia should have been taken care about 44 months ago when thousands of people killed in the war were still alive. They contend that our own country and our own army should be taken care of first, and then send army detachments to other countries.

However, the majority of the Lithuanian Seimas members approved sending of the Lithuanian peacemakers to the NATO peace enforcement operation in the former Yugoslavia. [passage omitted]

Foreign Ministry Welcomes Russian Elections

LD2212065095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0626 GMT 22 Dec 95

[By Vladas Burbulis]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VILNIUS December 22 (Itar-Tass) — The Lithuanian Foreign Ministry has issued a statement, which welcomed the democratic character of elections in Russia.

"We point out that the elections were held on the basis of norms of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, that they were free and democratic. Russia made one more step on the way to the consolidation of democracy and human rights.

"We express hope that the active participation of Russian citizens in the elections will have a favourable impact on the reform processes," said that statement, that was published today.

Nuclear Plant Security Pact Signed With Sweden

WS2212112395 Tallinn BNS in English 1900 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vilnius, Dec 21, BNS — At the Lithuanian ministry of energy on Thursday, a treaty was signed, detailing financial support by the Swedish government for heightened security at Lithuania's nuclear power station in Ignalina in Northeastern Lithuania.

The agreement, providing for the transfer of 300 thousand litas worth of security devices, was signed for Lithuania by Viktor Shevaldin, director of the Ignalina atomic power station, and by Jan H. Nistad, director of the Swedish agency for nuclear power station safety.

The TRAX Company, a Swedish division of the multinational ABB Corporation, will sell and install special equipment for a new access-authorization system, which will enable the station's current entry procedures to be updated. Computerized magnetic-strip ID-cards will be employed, surveillance cameras mounted and metal-detectors and other security devices introduced.

Jan H. Nystadas described this contract as the first stage in the improvement of the station's personnel access-control system. Later, security will be heightened on the station's surrounding grounds, and the station itself will be divided into three zones, requiring different levels of security clearance for those employed there.

The Swedish government alone, however, will most probably be unable to carry out these projects and has therefore begun negotiating with the U.S. government on assistance for heightening security at the Ignalina station, Nystad said.

Shevaldin noted that the antiquated soviet-period security equipment, restricting access to the plant up until this point, dated back several decades and was blatantly inadequate to assure the station's security.

The serious financial crisis, facing Ignalina, does not permit the station itself to find funds to finance TRAX devices, the station chief said, thanking the Swedish government for its support.

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The Swedish government had promptly helped heighten security at Ignalina after two bomb threats in the fall of 1994. Swedish assistance at that time enabled improving the fire prevention system, dealing with atomic wastes and keeping inventory of nuclear fuel.

President, Officials Discuss Energy Supply Sector

LD1912222095 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in English 2000 GMT 19 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The situation in the Lithuanian energy sector was the topic of consultations on Monday between President Algirdas Brazauskas, Minister of Energy Arvydas Lescinskas, and directors of the Bank of Lithuania.

The Lithuanian president was informed on the state of the energy sector and the sources of financing the system in 1996 when electricity and gas prices will again be raised were discussed.

Energy Minister Arvydas Lescinskas told reporters that the possibilities for reconstruction and modernization of the energy sector were also on the meeting's agenda, the daily LIETUVOS RYTAS reports.

Commenting on the conflict between the Ignalina Atomic Power Plant and the Lietuvos Energija [Lithuanian Energy Suppliers] company, Mr. Brazauskas said that litigation of this sort was highly inappropriate. It was decided that the Ministry of Energy would submit a plan of actions within two weeks to the administration to resolve the conflict.

The Ignalina Power Plant filed a law suit against the company Lietuvos Energija several months ago to force the company to pay its 189 million litas debts for energy already generated and sold.

Bank Chairman Being Questioned by Police

LD2112175395 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Lithuanian Joint-Stock Innovation Bank [LAIB] building in downtown Vilnius was surrounded by the police until earlier today; the cordon was removed after Arturas Balkevicius, the chairman of the LAIB Board of Directors, surrendered to the police.

The head of the Information Department of the Interior Ministry said that the bank building was surrounded by the police all night long, however, the law enforcement officers were not admitted to the bank. Kazys Ratkevicius, the chairman of the Bank of Lithuania, was not admitted to the LAIB premises, either. Then an ultimatum was presented to the representatives of the LAIB, saying that unless the bank's chairman Balkevicius appears at a police station, a force will be used against the LAIB security officers. Arturas Balkevicius is now detained and being questioned.

Balkevicius is charged with squandering the bank's money on a very large scale. This was announced at a news conference today by Romas Ramanauskas, the first Deputy chairman of the LAIB. According to Ramanauskas, the apartment of Jonas Ragauskas, the director of the LAIB Treasury Department, has been searched, too. [passage omitted]

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